

University Of Canterbury

**“An Investigative and  
Documentary Study of Music  
and Change within a Buddhist  
Community in Christchurch,  
New Zealand.”**

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Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of MA

2002

## Abstract

The influx of Taiwanese immigrants to New Zealand in the 1980s and 1990s has meant that many aspects of Chinese culture have been transplanted into the Western environment of New Zealand. Because of cultural isolation, many immigrants have attached themselves to ethnic enclaves of Taiwanese people, where Chinese is spoken and the culture is practised. Such enclaves have been created in Christchurch with one particular example based around a Buddhist temple, which belongs to the Fo Kuang organisation of Taiwan.

The purpose of this study was twofold. Firstly, to investigate if change had occurred in the liturgical chant, as used in the Christchurch temple, when compared to the chant in Fo Kuang Shan, the Fo Kuang organisation's main temple in Taiwan, and secondly, was to establish reasons for this change to have taken place.

A section of the Buddhist liturgy was chosen on which to base the comparison, and recent recordings from both temples were transcribed to gauge what change had occurred in the eight-year period that the Christchurch temple had been geographically separate from Taiwan. Interviews were also held with members of the Fo Kuang's clergy and members of the congregation of the Christchurch temple, to establish their religious background, and their knowledge of the Buddhist faith and music traditions.

The transcriptions showed how the Christchurch temple's chant, although possessing a strong resemblance, has separated from the established tradition in Taiwan, and independently developed its own variation. This is mostly a simpler

version, slow and unadorned, with several generic characteristics, such as the harmonisation of passages of the chant, which is unusual in a historical tradition that is strictly non-harmonised.

The interviews showed how many of the Taiwanese immigrants have a heterogeneous and often confused religious background, extracted from the three main faiths of Chinese culture, Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism. This has meant that knowledge of the fundamentals of Buddhism and its music practice has been minimal amongst many of the Christchurch temple's attendees, and has caused the chant in the temple to change considerably from its parent tradition in Taiwan.

# “An Investigative and Documentary Study of Music and Change within a Buddhist Community in Christchurch, New Zealand.”

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## Acknowledgements

The research that went into this thesis would not have been as enjoyable as it has been, without the assistance of Tracy Chen. She unfailingly assisted me by acting as translator, guide and confidant throughout the course of this study. She helped me become familiar with the rituals, traditions and history of the Christchurch temple, introduced me to the right people, and always invited me to stay for lunch after the services.

I am also very grateful for the assistance given to me by the Ku family, the founders of the Christchurch temple, for their insights into the temple's beginnings as conveyed through interviews and theses submitted as part of the children's studies at university.

Thanks also goes out to the people interviewed for this project, who cannot be named, but who all played an intrinsic part. I greatly appreciate their candid and forthright replies, and their often moving personal experiences as immigrants to New Zealand.

I am also thankful to my tutor, Elaine Dobson, who acted as the necessary 'sounding-board' for my ideas, and for throwing useful hints when they were needed. She, as well as my associate-supervisor Bill Willmott, provided valuable insight into Buddhism and Taiwan, as well as performing the tedious, but necessary job of proof-reading, along with Allen Cookson and Fiona Le Heux. I am also indebted to Jill Tetley, the Students' Association's Education Co-ordinator. Without her advocacy, on my behalf, this thesis would not have been completed to the standard that I expected.

## Introduction

The aim of the study was to explore the idea of musical change in an immigrant Taiwanese Buddhist temple in Christchurch, New Zealand. The Taiwanese immigrants being recent citizens of Taiwan, and members of at least one of the ethnic groups presently found in Taiwan. The temple that was studied is part of the Fo Kuang organisation and Buddha's Light International Association, both based in Taiwan, and devoted to the dissemination of Buddhist teachings and philanthropic works. There are branches throughout the world of these groups, mainly where a large number of Taiwanese immigrants are, as in London, Los Angeles, New York and Sydney, to mention a few. The Christchurch branch, located at 566 Cashel Street, and established in a renovated church, is one of the newest, having been set up by immigrants in 1993, ostensibly to cater for the religious needs of the many Taiwanese who came to Christchurch in the late 1980s and 1990s.

Previous research amongst an immigrant Taiwanese Christian community in Christchurch, showed that most of the youth have little interest in their culture and traditions. Similar to the findings of another researcher, they found the Western way of life and values, such as the Christian religion, more desirable than clinging to old ways and traditions like Confucianism and Buddhism.<sup>1</sup> The fact that there was present in Christchurch another group of Taiwanese immigrants, that chose to associate with a Buddhist temple, thereby apparently blending their traditional Buddhist belief with their Western lifestyle, raised the interesting question, as to what effect has their

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<sup>1</sup> Sam Leong, "The Asianisation of Western Music? – An Insider's Perspective," *Sound Ideas*, 4, 1, (2000): 8, and Benjamin Le Heux, "Identity Through Music: The Music of the Chinese Christian Church in Avonhead, Christchurch, and the Role that Music Plays in Providing Identity for its Musicians," Mus.B (Hons.) Research paper, 2000.



Western lifestyle had on the Buddhist music tradition as practised in their temple in Christchurch?

One approach to this question would be to compare the music tradition as practised in the home temple of the Fo Kuáng organisation in Taiwan with its descendant, the Christchurch temple.

The music associated with the Christchurch temple is quite varied, with the traditional liturgical chant used in the ceremonies, audio-taped contemporary arrangements of Buddhist music played in the temple and hall, and in the festivals, three-part choirs singing and the youth group ‘lip-syncing’ to popularised arrangements of the sutras. Traditional Chinese instrumentalists also play ‘traditional’ tunes on the *er hu*<sup>2</sup> and *gu’qin*<sup>3</sup> in these festivals. Lion dancing and other cultures’ music or dance traditions also feature. Members of the temple have also written, often in connection with the local university’s composition classes, compositions with references to the Buddhist music tradition.<sup>4</sup>

The Fo Kuang tradition has been quite innovative with regard to embracing new ideas and practices, and has brought about much change in the Buddhist music tradition as practised outside the temple. Examples of such were mentioned above, and occur alike in most of the Fo Kuang temples world wide. These obvious changes

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<sup>2</sup> Two-stringed bowed fiddle.

<sup>3</sup> Seven-stringed plucked zither.

<sup>4</sup> An example of a contemporary Buddhist composition written by a member of the Christchurch temple is Yiyi Ku, “Folio of Composition – ‘for 12 strings’, ‘Heart Sutra’, ‘for Gu-zheng and Piano’,” M.Mus. diss., U of Canterbury, 1998.

to historical Buddhist music tradition that occur in the Christchurch temple, are, no doubt, under the influence of Taiwan, and so will not be explored in this research.

The Buddhist liturgical chant as used within the temple is another matter, as interviews with several members of the Fo Kuang clergy all agreed that the chant had remained unchanged for at least the last millennium.<sup>5</sup> Such statements are contrary to some historians who state that “Buddhism is renowned as a religion of adapt[ation] and assimilation, shaping and reshaping itself to accommodate new cultures and circumstances.”<sup>6</sup> The clergy members’ sweeping statements demand verification, but to investigate change within the whole historical tradition of Chinese Buddhist music would be difficult, with it being mostly an oral tradition. The opportunity, however, should not be missed, to see if change has taken place in the liturgical chant in the Christchurch temple, in the short space of time that it has been geographically separated from its parent tradition in Taiwan. As the liturgical chant is by far one of the most profound expressions of the Buddhist faith, any change discovered will be of far more interest than manda-pop music in the popularised Buddha's Birthday celebrations.<sup>7</sup>

The Buddhist musical tradition, as practised in the Fo Kuang temples, has a varied repertoire of many different sutras and anthems. Because of their greater number, individual sutras are performed less regularly, and therefore, the frequently

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<sup>5</sup> Personal Interviews with Reverend Man Chen, 31.6.01, Abbess Man Chien, 28.10.01, and Vice-Abbess Man Shin, 4.11.01.

<sup>6</sup> Donald Lopez, *The Story of Buddhism: A Concise Guide to its History and Teachings* (San Francisco: Harper, 2001) 255.

<sup>7</sup> Manda-pop is the Mandarin and Chinese or Taiwanese version of canto-pop, Hong Kong pop music in the Western style, and in Cantonese, hence the ‘Canto’.

performed Incense Anthems provide a better example for study. This paper will, therefore, concentrate on one of the Incense Anthems. “Offering incense is a very important act of worship in Buddhist contexts,”<sup>8</sup> and so Incense Anthems that perform the task of offering to the Buddha the burnt incense and food offerings, are an important feature of any service in the Fo Kuang organisation. The Incense Anthem *Chieh Ting*, on which this research is based, consists of eight parts.<sup>9</sup> The Anthem and the Invocation, which are the first two, are concentrated on, as these sections concisely provide many examples of the characteristics of Buddhist liturgical chant that pertain to this study, such as wave singing and unison chanting. This approach will avoid unnecessary verbiage and repetition by not covering the entire plethora of Buddhist liturgy.

Recordings of *Chieh Ting*, as sung in the Christchurch temple, were made during services in the period April 2001 to February 2002. A June recording was chosen as the basis of the comparison between the two temples, as it was central in the timeframe of this research. A commercial recording of *Chieh Ting* from Fo Kuang Shan, the main temple in Taiwan of the Fo Kuang organisation, provided the other half of the comparison.<sup>10</sup>

After recognising that change in the chant has happened, the reasons for this change are explained. Interviews were undertaken with sixteen individuals, who are a representative sample of the temple’s attendees. There were several young and middle

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<sup>8</sup> Francesca Tarocco, “Buddhist Music,” *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Ed Stanley Sadie. V.4. (London: Macmillan, 2001) 551.

<sup>9</sup> The Incense Anthem *Chieh Ting* consists of: 1. Anthem, 2. Invocation, 3. Food Conversion Mantra, 4. Amtra Mantra, 5. Offering Gatha, 6. Universal Donation Mantra, 7. Offering Anthem, 8. Dedication.

<sup>10</sup> *Lunch Service Fo Kuang Shan*. Kaohsiung: Fo Kuang Publishing, 0305, n.d.

aged people, an aboriginal Taiwanese and three New Zealanders, as well as four members of the clergy. The temple's master suggested a few of the people who were to be interviewed, and others were selected by the author, because they represented different groups in the temple and had average English skills. Questions were asked of them to specifically find out their level of Buddhist awareness, and their opinions and experiences surrounding Buddhist liturgical chant. Their answers and the author's personal observations made during the course of this study were taken into account when ascertaining possible reasons for the change in the chant that has taken place in the Christchurch temple.

Resources pertaining to this study are documented in footnotes and the appendix. Literature references play an important role where the history of Chinese and Taiwanese Buddhism and their particular characteristics are established.<sup>10</sup>

Terence Lancashire's work "Music for the Gods: Musical Transmission and Change in Iwami *Kagura*" is a study that has a similar approach to this thesis, where related traditions were investigated for change, but pertains to a different musical culture. This study goes one step further from Lancashire's work, as after change has been identified, attempts will be made to explain why these changes have occurred.

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<sup>10</sup> Fu Chi-Ying, *Handing Down the Light: The Biography of Venerable Master Hsing Yun*, trans. Amy Lui-Ma (California: Hsi Lai UP, 1996). Richard A. Gard, "Buddhist Contributions to Asian Cultural Arts," *Maha Bodhi* 85 (1977): 119-128. Hsing Yun, *How to be a Fo Kuang Buddhist*, Vol. 1 (Fo Kuang Publishing, 1987). Soiti Iwata, "Buddhist Music with Reference to Ceremony," *Music Cultures in Interaction*, eds. Mabuchi Usaburo and Yamaguti Osamu (Tokyo: Academia, 1986) 61-63. Charles Brewer Jones, "Buddhism in Taiwan: A Historical Survey," Ph.D. diss., U of Virginia, 1996; *Buddhism in Taiwan: Religion and the State 1660-1990* (Hawaii: Hawaii UP, 1999) and "Stages in the Life of Lay Buddhists in Taiwan," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 20, 2, (1997): 113-139. Stephen Jones, "Buddhist Music-ritual in China Today," *Middle Way* 67, 3 (1992): 100-62. Joseph Ku, "Untitled," M.F.A. diss., U of Canterbury, 2000; and "Home Taiwan New Zealand," B.F.A.(Hons.) research paper, U of Canterbury, 1999. Man Chien, ed. *Entry into the Profound: A First Step to Understanding Buddhism* (Sydney: Fo Kuang Publishing, 2000). T.H. Tsai, "Change and Continuity: A Study Chinese Buddhist Music in England," Partial M.Mus. diss., U of Sheffield, 2000.

T.H. Tsai's M.Mus. thesis, completed in 2000, and entitled "Change and Continuity: A Study of Chinese Buddhist Music in England," was also useful, as it looked at change in the esoteric and profound conceptions and ritual of the Fo Kuang temple in London and the Far Yue Monastery in Birmingham, and acts as a contrast to this thesis, which addresses change that can be seen in the corporeal and concrete form of chant.

The biography by Fu Chi-Ying, of Hsing Yun, the founder of the Fo Kuang organisation, was also invaluable to this study. It provided important background detail to the establishment of the organisation, as well as a fascinating account of the historical fortunes of Buddhism in China and Taiwan.

Literature that addresses the transference of Buddhism to the West has also been useful, as well as studies that concern the sociology of Asian immigrants.<sup>11</sup>

This thesis adopts the Taiwanese romanisation system, as many original quotes were obtained from Taiwanese writers. Where it is the accepted spelling, the pinyin system is used for place names such as Guangdong, in Mainland China. Where Christian names are made up of two words, such as the author Fu Chi-ying, the first

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<sup>11</sup> Stephen Batchelor, *The Awakening of the West: The Encounter of Buddhism and Western Culture* (Berkeley: Parallax, 1994). Mei Lin Eyou, "Cultural Identity and Psychological Adjustment of Adolescent Chinese Immigrants in New Zealand," M.A. diss., U of Auckland, 1997. Rick Fields, *How the Swans Came to the Lake: A Narrative History of Buddhism in America*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Boston: Shambhala, 1992). Paul David Numrich, *Old Wisdom in the New World: Americanisation in Two Immigrant Theravada Buddhist Temples* (Knoxville: Tennessee UP, 1996). Lee C Lee and Nolan W.S. Zane, *Handbook of Asian American Psychology* (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage, 1998). Charles S. Prebish, *American Buddhism* (North Scituate, Massachusetts: Duxbury, 1979). Duncan Ryuken Williams and Christopher S. Queen, eds. *American Buddhism: Methods and Findings in Recent Scholarship* (Richmond: Curzon, 1999).

letter of the second word has been capitalised to maintain a continuity throughout the work, as some writers use lowercase, and others use a capital letter. This results in Fu Chi-Ying. The citation of resources in footnotes and the bibliography follows the recommendations set out by Achtert and Gibaldi in *The MLA Style Manual*.

There are five chapters in this thesis, the first three dealing with brief introductions and backgrounds to Chinese Buddhism and the Fo Kuang organisation, the history of the Christchurch temple and Chinese Buddhist music. The fourth chapter describes what change was discovered to have taken place in the chant of the Christchurch temple, and the final chapter offers several reasons why this change has taken place.

## *Chapter One*

### Chinese Buddhism and the Fo Kuang Order: A Brief Background

This chapter sets out the historical and religious background behind the Christchurch temple, information which is essential to know, to be able to comprehend the eclectic and diverse issues that surrounds it, and which provide a suitable environment for musical change.

The sections on Buddhism in China and Taiwan briefly show Buddhism's mixed fortunes and changeable popularity, and how early in its history, members of the sangha<sup>1</sup> were banished to the mountains, leading to an estrangement from the majority of the Chinese people. An account is told of individual members of the sangha in the early twentieth century, who fought against this separation, and how some implemented fresh ideas of a new and approachable Buddhism that is accessible to the laity, and that really reverts back to the original teachings of the Buddha.

The confused state of Buddhism in Taiwan is discussed, showing how over its history, traditional religions as well as aspects of Taoism and Confucianism were blended with Buddhist practice, of which repercussions are still being felt in the Christchurch temple at this time of study.

This chapter isolates one example of a refugee Buddhist monk, Hsing Yun, who takes on the task of re-educating the Taiwanese people about Buddhism, and

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<sup>1</sup> The Buddhist community of monks and nuns.

briefly traces his life, from his departure from Mainland China, and his arrival in poverty stricken Taiwan. It shows, how through diligent effort, he established an organisation dedicated to the spreading of 'Humanistic Buddhism', and how he has popularised Buddhism in Taiwan. This section also offers a description on how this was achieved, and what his central doctrines are.

The establishment of the lay branch of Hsing Yun's organisation, and how this has spread throughout the world, is also mentioned, setting an important background for the Christchurch temple, and which helps to understand the power-struggles that have taken place, and how they have a precipitating effect on change within the temple.

## 1. Buddhism in China

Buddhism was introduced into China from India during the reign of the Ming emperor (58 – 75 AD) of the Eastern Han dynasty, and flourished for the following 400 years.<sup>2</sup> Many of the Chinese intelligentsia became fascinated with Buddhism and as a result, several monks became key figures in literary and political arenas, including the imperial court.<sup>3</sup> Buddhist culture influenced the arts greatly and became entrenched in Chinese society through the charitable works and philosophies practised by its followers.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Fu Chi-Ying, *Handing Down the Light – The Biography of Venerable Master Hsing Yun*, trans. Amy Lui-Ma (California: Hsi Lai University Press, 1996) 50.

<sup>3</sup> Rick Fields, *How the Swans Came to the Lake: A Narrative History of Buddhism in America*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1992) 10-11.

<sup>4</sup> Richard A. Gard, "Buddhist Contribution to Asian Cultural Arts," *Maha Bodhi*, 85, 4-5, (1977): 119-128, and Christmas Humphreys, *Buddhism* (London: Penguin, 1951) 12 and 214-216.



During the Sung (960 – 1279 AD) and Yuan (1279 – 1368 AD) dynasties, however, Buddhism was politically oppressed and fell out of official favour because of Buddhism's advocacy of equality and the ideals of the monastic life.<sup>5</sup> These ideas were seen to subvert the traditional Confucian values of the individual's loyalty to the family and the emperor.<sup>6</sup> Recognising this, the emperor Chu Yuan-Chang (1328 – 1398 AD) banished the Buddhist sangha to the mountains. Isolated from secular society, Buddhism soon became reclusive, introspective and increasingly irrelevant to the people. One historian noted that Buddhism was "turning into a faith of doom, [and that] Buddhist monastics [sic] seemed to have little more to do than perform funeral services to deliver the dead from hell. The religion totally dissociated itself from the masses,"<sup>7</sup> and remained that way until the early twentieth century.

Another historian cites three more reasons for the decline in Chinese Buddhism in this era, the first reason being the popular growth of a neo-Confucianism that borrowed greatly from Buddhism yet made less personal demands on the adherent. The second was the destruction of Indian Buddhism by Moslem invaders that led to a halt in "inspirational impulses" from India. Finally, was the gradual moral decline of the sangha, as predicted by the Buddha's teachings on impermanence, by the breaking of the traditional rules like celibacy and poverty,<sup>8</sup> and the concentration on the financially lucrative funerals for the dead.

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<sup>5</sup> Fu Chi-Ying, 51-52.

<sup>6</sup> John Snelling, *The Buddhist Handbook: A Complete Guide to Buddhist Teaching and Practice* (London: Rider, 1987) 141-142.

<sup>7</sup> Fu Chi-Ying, 53-54.

<sup>8</sup> John Snelling, 166-167.

On the establishment of the Republic under Dr. Sun Yat-Sen in 1911, Buddhism suffered further persecutions as it was seen by many of the ruling factions to be feudalistic and superstitious. Many who belonged to the younger generation were interested in Western philosophies and politics and discarded old traditions and values.<sup>9</sup> In 1927, the warlord Feng Yu-Hsiang (called the 'Christian General'), ordered the execution or expulsion of the sangha from Henan province in north-eastern China, and the central government's minister of internal affairs suggested that all monasteries be turned into schools.<sup>10</sup>

During the beginning decades of the twentieth century, the Chinese people suffered unimaginably difficult times under the oppressive rule of the warlords, the Japanese occupation and the ongoing conflict between the Kuomintang and the Communists. Knowing how irrelevant that they had become to many people because of the terrible times that they lived in, some of the sangha began to question their position in society and started to take a more active role in promoting Buddhism and its compassionate philosophy to the people. One notable proponent of this revival was Venerable Master T'ai Hsu (1889-1947), who

taught a redirection of Buddhism from the passivity of reclusion onto the positivity [sic] of humanity. In spearheading massive reforms in the Buddhist hierarchy, monasterial [sic] assets, and doctrinal teachings, he urged that "worldly matters be tackled with unworldly spirits."

In restructuring the Buddhist hierarchy, Master T'ai Hsu urged that the slack sangha be trained anew with the purpose of making every monk a competent preacher and every nun a qualified teacher and nurse. In reforming doctrinal teachings, he urged that the fatalistic belief that "life is suffering" and other obsolete conceptions be substituted with the affirmation of a valuable life, a correct view of it, and a positive attitude to live it. In revolutionising monasterial [sic] assets, he urged that private ownership be returned to the

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<sup>9</sup> Christmas Humphreys, 221.

<sup>10</sup> Fu, Chi-Ying, 54-55.

entire monastery, reliance on the monastery be replaced by self-sufficiency, and self-sufficiency be attained through individual efforts and cultivation.<sup>11</sup>

Older members of the sangha condemned T'ai Hsu as a heretic, but many of the younger generation were inspired by his ideas, and after the Communist take-over, some went on to lead the revival of Buddhism in Taiwan, based on his teachings of bringing Buddhism back to the people.

## **2. Buddhism in Taiwan**

Buddhism at that time was in a similar state in both China and Taiwan, with many people concerned more about day-to-day survival than religious matters.

Taiwanese Buddhism was further complicated in that many elements of the polytheistic folk religions of the indigenous Taiwanese were mixed with the Buddha's teachings. Many temples in Taiwan showed the influence of concepts, teachings and architectural designs from Taoism, Buddhism and the folk religions. It was not unusual to find a Taoist temple decorated with figures from folk mythology such as Matsu, goddess of the sea, and various rock and tree gods.<sup>12</sup>

Another example of this confusion is the worship of the bodhisattva,<sup>13</sup> Guanyin. (Another popular name for her is Avalokitesvara.) Immigrants to Taiwan from Fujian and Guangdong provinces in the early eighteenth century brought images of Guanyin, essentially a Buddhist deity, and installed these images in shrines in their homes, and eventually in temples. Because many temples in Taiwan were built

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 55-56.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 80.

<sup>13</sup> A Bodhisattva is a person or spiritual being seeking enlightenment through charitable works. As a Bodhisattva is devoid of egoism and devoted to others, they often choose to remain 'unenlightened', thereby delaying their entry to Nirvana, to assist others to obtain enlightenment first.

privately by the laity, who often had limited or confused religious knowledge, many incongruities arose. One was the changing of the names of the deities and the ritual associated with its particular worship. A June 1943 report issued by the Japanese colonial government in Taiwan, noted that in the 304 temples in Taiwan dedicated to Guanyin, she was worshipped as 'Mother Guanyin' (*Guanyin Ma*), a Taoist deity. The report further stated that, "Pigs are butchered and chickens slaughtered in front of her image in sacrifice, and so she has completely lost all of her original Buddhist significance."<sup>14</sup>

This religious confusion is made worse, as the historian Irene Lin points out, by her opinion that "Chinese culture does not view religious traditions as mutually exclusive. A person can belong to different religious organisations simultaneously and appeal to one or another, or even many."<sup>15</sup> Chinese Buddhism itself can be very perplexing in that any aspect of the five traditional schools of Chinese Buddhist belief, (i.e. Ch'an, Vinaya, T'ien-t'ai, Tantric and Ching-t'u) can be included in the individual's acts of worship.<sup>16</sup> What clear distinctions there were between each school have now been mostly blurred.

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<sup>14</sup> Taiwan Sotokufu Bunkyojyoku 1943, *Taiwan Jibyo Mondai: Kyukan Shinko Kaizen ni kan suru Chosa Hokoku Daishi* (The Problem of Temples and Shrines in Taiwan: The Fourth Report on the Investigation into the Improvement of the Old Customs and Beliefs). n.p.: Taiwan Sotokufu Bunkyojyoku. As cited in Charles Brewer Jones, *Buddhism in Taiwan – Religion and State 1660-1990*. (University of Hawaii Press, 1999) 7.

<sup>15</sup> Irene Lin, "Journey to the Far West: Chinese Buddhism in America," *Amerasia Journal* 22, 1, (1996): 107. As found in Charles S. Prebish, *Luminous Passage: The Practice and Study of Buddhism in America* (California: U of California Press, 1999) 27. This phenomenon of ecumenism between often contradicting religions, within the spirituality of some Chinese individuals, has been witnessed in Christchurch through several informal conversations with visitors to the temple. These have been people who regularly attend Christian services but feel equally comfortable, on a spiritual level, with Buddhism.

<sup>16</sup> Charles S. Prebish, 27.

In 1950, the Buddhist Association of the Republic of China (*Zhongguo Fojiao Hui*) commissioned the monk Dongchu to tour Taiwan and report back on the present state of Buddhism. One of his significant findings was of the “immaturity of religious consciousness, and a basic lack of [Buddhist] education” amongst the people and the sangha. He commented how in most temples he went to, the resident sangha “were just as likely to recite a [T]aoist scripture such as the *True Scripture of the Jade Emperor* (*Yuhuang Zhenjing*) or the *Blood-Basin Scripture* (*Xuepen Jing*) as a Buddhist sutra; most temples had images to [T]aoist and folk divinities alongside, and sometimes in positions superior to, images of Sakyamuni Buddha, Amitabha Buddha, or Guanyin. Perhaps worst of all, temples in which monks and nuns lived together appeared to be the rule rather than the exception.”<sup>17</sup> This confused and heterogeneous religious knowledge as shown here, although to a lesser extent, is still inherent amongst secular Taiwanese society today and will be discussed later on in this paper.

The fifty-year occupation of Taiwan (1895-1945) by colonial Japan also created much confusion within Taiwanese Buddhism. Although Japanese Buddhism and Chinese Buddhism are both from the Mahayana school, there are distinct differences between the two.<sup>18</sup> Essentially, these are that the Japanese sangha are not bound by rules of vegetarianism and celibacy, and the separation of the sangha and the laity is not strictly enforced, leading some of the Japanese sangha to abandon their cassocks outside the temple for civilian clothes and to be involved in sexual

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<sup>17</sup> Charles Brewer Jones, 113.

<sup>18</sup> Of the different sects present in number in Taiwan were the Shinshu Honganji Sect, the Shinshu Otani and Kibe Sects, the Soto School of Zen, the Rinza School of Zen, the Nichiren School, the Tendai School, the Hokke School, the Kegon School, the Jodo School's Seizan Sect and the Shingon School. Ibid., 34-35.

activities.<sup>19</sup> Japanese Buddhist missionaries were active during the occupation, and although there was resistance to the Japanese version of Buddhism, as it was light on precepts and discipline, many of the Taiwanese laity and sangha did convert, some for political reasons.<sup>20</sup>

Because of the American support of Kuomintang rule in Taiwan, in 1949, Christianity became the next religion for the opportunists, and many Protestant and Catholic missionaries were likewise sent out into the villages to find converts. Several people in official positions converted to Christianity, including President Chiang Kai-Shek and his wife, as did many others. Chinese Buddhism was again officially out of favour, and Buddhist temples and grounds were requisitioned by the Guomintang government for their own use. Taipei's Shan-Tao temple was used as a recruiting office for the military, the main shrine of Yuan Shan's Lin-Chi temple was turned into a memorial hall for Dr Sun Yat-Sen, and the Tung Pen-Yuan temple was almost converted into a mosque. Such was the disorganised and degraded state of Buddhism in Taiwan at that time.<sup>21</sup> The imposition in 1949 of martial law by the Kuomintang that resulted in the withdrawal of freedoms of association and the unrestricted establishment of organisations, was also a hindrance to the growth of Buddhism in Taiwan. This was finally alleviated by the lifting of martial law in 1987, and the repeal of strict legislation surrounding non-officially endorsed organisations by the 1989 'Revised Law on Civic Organisations.'<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Fu Chi-Ying, 74, and Charles Brewer Jones, 113.

<sup>20</sup> Charles Brewer Jones, 34 and 37.

<sup>21</sup> Fu Chi-Ying, 81-82.

<sup>22</sup> Fu Chi-Ying, 368 and Jones, Charles Brewer, 189.

### 3. Hsing Yun and the Fo Kuang Order

The future of Buddhism in Taiwan was dim when the founder of the Fo Kuang order, Venerable Master Hsing Yun (b. 1927), arrived from China as a refugee in 1949. Hsing Yun was greatly influenced by T'ai Hsu's teachings of bringing Buddhism back to the masses through education and by making it more accessible and relevant to their lives. Soon after the fall of Nanjing to the Communists, Hsing Yun escaped to Taiwan with the intention of spreading the Dharma there and implementing T'ai Hsu's ideas.

Similar to many other Chinese refugees arriving in Taiwan at that time, he had no possessions and no contacts. All the Buddhist temples were full of people in a similar situation to himself.<sup>23</sup> He finally found refuge in a temple in Chungli, where he soon became well known for his boundless energy in work. Hsing Yun eventually built up responsibilities such as editor-in-chief of *Rensheng*, Dongchu's Buddhist periodical, and in 1951 was named chief of educational affairs for the Taiwan Buddhist Lecture Society. In 1952, he moved to the eastern town of Ilan to teach the Dharma there, and began to put into practice T'ai Hsu's ideas.<sup>24</sup>

During his tenure there, he established many 'firsts' for Buddhism, that involved making Buddhism more accessible to people. These included a Buddha-recitation society, a Dharma-propagation society, a Buddhist choir, a Buddhist students' association, a Buddhist Sunday school, a kindergarten and a Buddhist Dharma-propagation radio programme.<sup>25</sup> At that time, many older members of the

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<sup>23</sup> Charles Brewer Jones, 106-107.

<sup>24</sup> Fu Chi-Ying, 88.

<sup>25</sup> Charles Brewer Jones, 186.

sangha criticised Hsing Yun for his activities, especially when, as in the Buddhist choirs, Buddhist texts were placed in the vernacular and out of the context of the temple.<sup>26</sup> His energy and drive for Buddhism, however, and his radical approach made him well known across Taiwan, and he was regularly invited to teach around the island and submit writings for publication.<sup>27</sup>

With royalties from his many publications, Hsing Yun was able to purchase a bamboo-covered mountain in Kaohsiung County and eventually build Fo Kuang Shan temple, officially opened in 1967.<sup>28</sup> As he was now independent from any governing body or disapproving senior monks, he could freely implement in the temple's community the ideas that he had developed from T'ai Hsu's teachings. These ideas were principally based on the secularisation and development of 'Humanistic' Buddhism, which included the financial self-sufficiency of the temple and the teaching of the dharma through compassionate works.<sup>29</sup>

As an organisation, Fo Kuang broke "with many aspects of traditional Chinese Buddhism in order to adapt to modern circumstances, such as in the rationalisation of the evaluation and promotion system and the deliberate blurring between the clergy and the laity."<sup>30</sup> Hsing Yun also stressed the importance of educating people on the merits and practices of Buddhism, which, to a certain extent, addressed Dongchu's concern over the prevalent "immaturity" and ignorance of many Taiwanese over religious matters.

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<sup>26</sup> Fu Chi-Ying, 92.

<sup>27</sup> Charles Brewer Jones, 186.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 187.

<sup>29</sup> Fu Chi-Ying, 55-57.

<sup>30</sup> Charles Brewer Jones, 197-198.



#### 4. Humanistic Buddhism

Hsing Yun was driven by the thought that Buddhism was fast becoming obsolete in modern society, and that it had to be reformed for it to remain relevant. Doctrinally, this was to change the emphasis of the teaching from the fatalistic 'life is suffering' to the positive affirmation that life is valuable and people should be optimistic, not pessimistic about the future.<sup>31</sup>

He adopted the prefix of 'Humanistic' to describe his form of Buddhism, as it was people focussed, and separate from traditional Buddhism, that generally concentrated on the financially lucrative conducting of funerals and rites for the dead. Hsing Yun believed that the living had more need out of Buddhism than the dead. In his teachings, one of the main objectives of Buddhists, the liberation from the cycle of birth and death, would be held as a long-term goal, to be achieved in the future by study and practice. In the meantime, however, the immediate goal is to develop the individual's sense of compassion and morality.<sup>32</sup> Traditional Buddhism held itself aloof from the world, but Humanistic Buddhism realistically acknowledges that its followers must live in the world, and so delivers its message in an accessible and understandable way, and does not make strong demands on the lifestyles of its adherents. An example of this is that Hsing Yun chose not to teach the traditional austere ideas that Buddhism has on personal wealth, but encouraged people to get wealthy and re-distribute their wealth to the poor and needy.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Fu Chi-Ying, 56.

<sup>32</sup> Hsing Yun, *How to be a Fo Kuang Buddhist*, Vol.1. (Kaohsiung: Fo Kuang, 1987.) 15-16.

<sup>33</sup> Fu Chi-Ying, 228-230.

In making Buddhism more popular, he borrowed many ideas from Western religions, such as Sunday schools, prison visits and choirs. He has to some extent 'commercialised' Buddhism in his drive to popularise it, as one of his maxims was "Go the electronic way!", and he has subsequently appeared on television. His organisation cut the first Buddhist records, and he also encouraged the use of Buddhist popular songs to karaoke.<sup>34</sup>

In making Buddhism more accessible to people, he has adopted in his teachings and the way his organisation is run many expressions and ideas from contemporary lifestyles and business practice. He established his temples as scenic attractions, as they "have a distinctive, pleasant and upbeat image. [They are] premises for socialising [as well as] study."<sup>35</sup> Topics addressed in Hsing Yun's teachings always relate in some way to contemporary life such as emotions, bringing up teenage children or everyday struggles, and how Buddhism can answer their particular problems in life.<sup>36</sup>

Religious 'show business', pentecostal-style, has also been adopted by the organisation to grab the public's attention during services, as shown by this personal account.

People who have been to [Hsing Yun's] lectures rave about how sound effects and stage design are wedded with religious fervor [sic]: 'The curtain goes up to reveal five images of the Buddhas resting on a crimson carpet with an azure backdrop. Flower-, candle-, fruit-, and tea-bearing lay attendants in four groups solemnly walk through misty effects, generated by dry ice. Their guide is the drum. The lighting turns magical. Fifty cassock-clad monastics [sic] take the stage with Dharma instruments in hand. It's all so arresting.' With the

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 109-110.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 264.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 119.

atmosphere established, Hsing Yun ascends to deliver a speech drawn and timed to perfection.<sup>37</sup>

Fo Kuang has become an alternative title for Buddhism in Taiwan, and because of its popularity amongst the Taiwanese, has attracted many donations. “If we count Fo Kuang . . . as an enterprise, it will be in the list of the top 100 [in Taiwan for wealth]. It inherited the spirit of the traditional monastery . . . and combined this with the ideas of modern management.”<sup>38</sup>

As taught by T'ai Hsu, Hsing Yun endeavoured to have the temple financially independent, and not to rely on handouts from, at that time, the already war-stricken community. Members of the sangha who joined Hsing Yun at Fo Kuang Shan temple all helped achieve this goal by tending gardens and doing construction work themselves. Other income that helped support the temple came from royalties from publications, rental of the temple's land, surplus donations to his social welfare enterprises, income from Dharma-meetings, surpluses from sub-temples, voluntary donations to the temple and membership fees.<sup>39</sup>

Hsing Yun's organisation also undertakes extensive educational and social-work activities, and over the years have built and run schools, libraries, bookstores, museums, and facilitated public classes in foreign languages, flower arranging, martial arts, calligraphy, vegetarian cooking, and Buddhist dharma classes.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 117-118.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 197.

<sup>39</sup> Charles Brewer Jones, 187.

<sup>40</sup> Fu Chi-Ying, 351.

One of the first social welfare outreaches that the Fo Guang organisation undertook was the establishment in 1976 of the Fo Guang Clinic that offers free medical care to residents of Fo Guang and needy members of the surrounding community. In 1985, the 'Cloud and Water Mobile Clinic' was established, and consisted of a team of vans and trained staff which took medical care to people in remote places. Other activities established by the organisation include, an emergency aid programme, a 'Friendship and Care Brigade' that visits residents in Fo Guang's senior citizens' home, "an organ donor bank, a children's home, a retirement home for retired Fo Guang staff and supporters, a cemetery, and the 'Kuan Yin Life Conservation Group' for purchasing and freeing captured fish and birds."<sup>41</sup>

Since its founding in 1965, the Fo Kuang organisation has continuously expanded and has temples established all over Taiwan and many foreign countries. As of 1992, there are fourteen temples in Taiwan that belong to the Fo Kuang organisation and a further thirty-seven branches overseas in Japan, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Malaysia, India, the United States, Canada, Brazil, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Australia, New Zealand, and the Republic of South Africa.<sup>42</sup> These also have affiliated lay branches.

### **5. Buddha's Light International Association: Fo Kuang's Lay Branch**

The ending of martial law in Taiwan in 1987, meant that Hsing Yun could establish a blanket organisation for all his followers. Prior to the law change, the Buddhist Association of the Republic of China held a governmental monopoly over

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<sup>41</sup> Charles Brewer Jones, 188-189.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 188.

Buddhist organisations in Taiwan. In 1991, the Buddha's Light International Association (BLIA) was formed primarily to get lay people actively involved in Buddhism.

People used to think that Buddhism was mainly for monastics[sic], not for lay people. The coming of B.L.I.A., R.O.C. shall presage a transition from Buddhism for the sangha alone to Buddhism for everyone, a shift from the temple to society, to every household. The inertia, monotony, and solitary cultivation associated with Buddhism shall no longer be. The coming of B.L.I.A., R.O.C. shall re-energize Buddhism sufficiently for its altruistic function.<sup>43</sup>

The establishment of BLIA has enabled many immigrant Taiwanese groups around the world to join together under a common banner. These chapters outside Taiwan allow many of the immigrants to retain links with their culture through such activities as Tai Chi classes and festivals and also provide support networks for new immigrants to find accommodation and work. If there is sufficient interest and financial support, a temple is frequently built and a resident clergy member is appointed from the Fo Kuang organisation. The following chapter details how the temple in Christchurch was first begun in a similar manner.

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<sup>43</sup> Fu Chi-Ying, 369-370.

## *Chapter Two*

### The Christchurch Fo Kuang Temple

This chapter covers the establishment of the Christchurch temple, and shows how it was initially set up privately, and how a Malaysian nun, who belonged to the Fo Kuang organisation, instructed the owner of the temple how things were to be set up and convened. The music education that was present at the temple at that time is also covered. The numbers of attendees and the activities that occur in the present temple are mentioned, as well as a brief account of the Sunday service. Illustrations of the present Christchurch temple and 2001's Buddha's Birthday celebrations end this chapter.

#### **1. Brief History**

Isolated by language and cultural barriers, many new immigrants find themselves exploring and re-evaluating their own cultural past. Arriving in New Zealand in 1988, the founder of the Fo Kuang temple in Christchurch, Mrs Ku, found herself in this same predicament, and spent a considerable amount of time reading the books on Buddhism that she had brought from Taiwan. Although raised as a nominal Buddhist, she had very little practical knowledge about it, but found solace in reading these books.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Information obtained from personal interviews with informants 'F', 20.9.01, 'A', 19.6.01, 'B', 2.6.01, 'D', 4.6.0, 'H', 19.6.01, and 'I', 8.6.01, and Joseph Ku, "Untitled." diss., U of Canterbury, 2000, 106 and 108. All interviews took place in Christchurch.

In 1990, a Taiwanese friend introduced her to a Malaysian nun who was staying with a friend of hers in Christchurch. After several visits to the nun, where Buddhism was discussed in depth, Mrs Ku invited her to stay at her home, which she did. The nun was able to explain many of the things about Buddhism that Mrs Ku did not understand. After the nun returned to Malaysia, Mrs Ku and her family shifted to a larger property on the outskirts of Christchurch, and Mrs Ku decided that, as she had such a large amount of land, she would build a small temple so that others could learn about Buddhism. This was completed in December 1990.

Mrs Ku maintained contact with the Malaysian nun, who explained how services should be run, where people should sit, and where to place the statues and the Dharma instruments<sup>2</sup> used during Buddhist ceremonies. As the nun belonged to the Fo Kuang order, she gave Mrs Ku many of their publications and resource materials, including cassette tapes of the sutras, as sung in the temples in Taiwan. She also assisted Mrs Ku in procuring the statues of the Buddha and the Dharma instruments.

Mrs Ku learnt the melodies from the cassette tapes of the sutras<sup>3</sup> and taught them to her husband and eldest daughter, who together, led the service while playing the Dharma instruments when they started having public services in their temple. They mainly did the Heart and Guanyin Sutras, alternating them each week. They played the tapes during the service and followed the words in the Fo Kuang sutra books. These books also indicated when the percussion instruments were to be played.

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<sup>2</sup> A small drum, a woodblock in the shape of a wooden fish (muyu), a hand-held bell and a 'bell bowl' (da qing). See Chapter Three for more details.

<sup>3</sup> The sutras are the 'scriptures' of the Buddhist religion.

Mrs Ku sat an exam set by the Fo Kuang organisation and became a certified lecturer in Buddhism. As the people who regularly came to her temple (about ten in number at the beginning), had little practical Buddhist knowledge, Mrs Ku taught them a lot about Buddhist beliefs and practical Buddhism, as in the procedures for the service and the set melodies to which the sutras are sung. She found that teaching the melodies was easy as people generally followed everyone else and the tape. Mrs Ku did not tell them about staggered breathing, as she felt it did not matter as long as the melodies sounded harmonious. 'Wave singing', where everyone is singing an individual and independent line during the recitations of the Buddha's names, is another characteristic of Chinese Buddhist chant that was not taught.

As the congregation became familiar with the melodies of the sutras, Mrs Ku decided not to play the tapes during the service as it was hard to co-ordinate the percussion instruments with the recorded percussion instruments. Occasionally, a Fo Kuang 'reverend' would visit from Nan Tien temple in Sydney to lead the service as well as hold meditation and Buddhist classes for the Taiwanese immigrant community in Christchurch. No New Zealanders (people of European or Polynesian descent who are also New Zealand citizens), came at all during this period.

In 1992, with the number of Taiwanese immigrants in Christchurch growing, many more people came to the temple, and the services had to be held outside on the lawn. That same year, the Fo Kuang organisation purchased a disused Samoan Roman Catholic church and hall in Christchurch. Most of the funds came from the Fo Kuang organisation, but many of the Taiwanese immigrants contributed to its purchase price.



The temple was renovated during 1993, and opened later that year.

Architecturally, the changes were the installation of the Buddha and its alcove into the church, and the addition of a 'paranthesis-like' cornice above the stage in the church hall. The only external indication that the church and hall have become a Buddhist temple is a mural of the Buddha on the hall's exterior and a sign on the front of the church saying, 'International Buddhist Association of New Zealand (South Island).'<sup>4</sup>

Since the temple's opening, there have been five resident clergy. They usually come from Nan Tien temple, stay one or two years, and are then transferred elsewhere. As Mrs Ku strictly followed the instructions that the Malaysian nun gave her in holding Buddhist services, she noticed no differences between the services that she convened and those run by an ordained member of the Buddhist clergy. The present nun is called Man-Ching, and comes from Nan Tien. This is her first temple that she is in charge of.

## **2. Activities and Demography – 2001**

The main activity that occurs in the temple is the service on Sundays. For the first half of 2001, this was held at 3 PM and finished around 5 PM, but in the hope of attracting more people to the service, the time was changed to 10 AM, a tea break at around 11:20 and finishing at 12:30 PM. These services are always followed by a free vegetarian meal for the participants.

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<sup>4</sup> See illustrations on pages 30-33.

Other activities of a religious significance are the festivals and Dharma Functions held throughout the year to celebrate the various Buddhas' birthdays and to remember the community's ancestors. As the temple is seen as a centre for Chinese culture, several cultural activities also occur there, such as Chinese New Year festivals and weddings within the community. The temple is also the venue for Buddhist study groups, vegetarian cooking classes and T'ai Chi classes. The South Island Chapter of BLIA also holds their meetings here and often organise social activities with temple support such as 'Mothers' Day Out' and day trips to scenic areas. The temple also holds a considerable library of Buddhist texts and contemporary writings as well as Taiwanese newspapers.

Although the Christchurch Chapter of BLIA has around one hundred and fifty financial members, an average of only twenty-five attend the Sunday services. These people are generally regular attendees, all from Taiwan, and around 75% middle-aged women. There are three New Zealand men who also regularly attend. Several times curious New Zealanders have come along for the 'experience' and the food, but they rarely come back.

### **3. The Sunday Service**

A normal Sunday service begins with members of the congregation assembling in the temple's hall before the service at 9:45 AM for tea and conversation. About three minutes before the service is to start, at 10 AM, a lay member dressed in a brown cassock, signifying that she has adopted the five precepts, hits a wood block, called a *ban*, four to five times at the door of the hall, and the two entrances to the temple. This announces that the service is about to begin. At this

same time, another lay member, similarly attired, will light the candles and incense in front of the statue of the Buddha.

The congregation sits on cushions facing the Buddha, men on the right and women on the left. As there are always more women than men, some are told by the usher, again dressed in the brown cassock, to join the men. The temple's master then announces what sutras and anthems will be done. She then walks back to the ante-room and the drum player walks to the drum, and begins the percussive introduction typical of all the sutras. The other musician(s) then enter the room, stage right, led by the master, who is playing a handheld bell. The congregation then stand and face each other, with the palms of their hands together. The master and the two lay assistants who play the Dharma instruments then sit, with their backs to the Buddha and facing the congregation. As they sit, the congregation does also, facing the master and the Buddha. The master leads the chanting while using a microphone, and opens with a few bars of the sutra or anthem. This is not in a responsorial style, where the congregation 'answers' the leader, as the congregation joins in unison with the master after the introduction has finished.

The first part of the service consists of the recitation of a sutra, normally the Medicine Buddha Sutra, the Heart Sutra or the Amitaba Buddha sutra. The service is conducted entirely in Mandarin, and the congregation reads the sutras out of small books. The English translations available are limited, as not every sutra has a translation and the order is often incorrect, with parts of the sutra in one book and the remainder in another. During the first five minutes, about ten members of the congregation are given lighted incense sticks, which they place in front of the Buddha.

If the Amitaba Buddha sutra is done, the congregation also participate for a period of time in 'walking' meditation around the room while chanting the Amitaba Buddha's name approximately eighty times and then sit in silence for around five minutes of 'sitting' meditation. This does not occur in any of the other sutras. The congregation then go to the hall and have a cup of tea and conversation, returning to the temple when summoned again by the sound of the *ban*.

The second part of the service is normally the recitation of the incense anthem 'Lu Hsiang' or 'Chieh Ting.' Chieh Ting is performed most often. These anthems symbolically give the offerings of food and incense to the Buddha and also act to spread to all sentient beings the merit that is created during the service. The master then delivers a sermon to the congregation and ends the service with a unison prayer to the Buddha in thanks for the food that they are about to eat. This food is nearly always donated to the temple by its members and is prepared during the service by several women who take the job in turns.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Information obtained from firsthand experience during fieldwork within the Christchurch temple and its community in the period February 2001 to February 2002.

## Illustrations of the Christchurch Fo Kuang Temple

From the Author's Collection

**1. and 2. The temple as viewed from the road.**





### 3. Entranceway to the Hall.



### 4. Interior view of the Hall, showing 'parenthesis style' of cornices.





5. Interior view of the temple showing main shrine

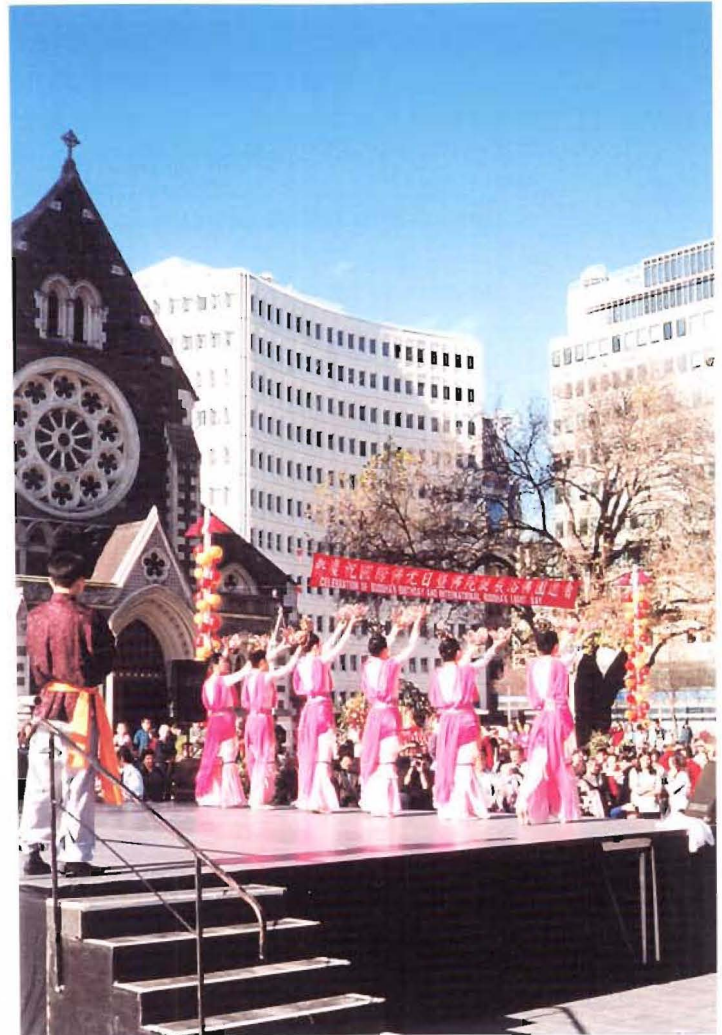
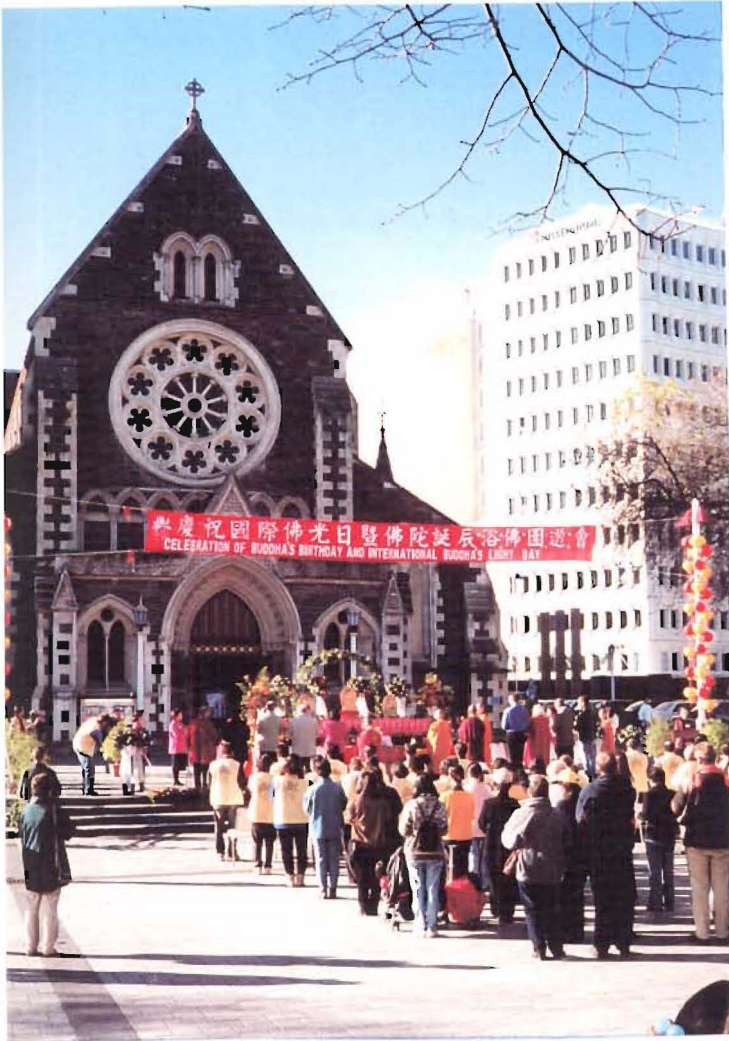


6. Close up of the altar showing some of the Dharma instruments. From left to right, both sizes of *Muyu*, *Da Qing*, and *Yin Qing*. *Tiao Qing* and *Gu* are obscured to the extreme right of the altar.





7. Buddha's Birthday in Christchurch's Cathedral Square, May 19, 2001  
 8. *Dun Huang* dancers brought especially from Taiwan for the occasion.



9. Mobile altar at Buddha's Birthday celebrations. Note 'Donation Box' in front of the altar, where people are expected to place donations when they 'Wash the Buddha', or offer incense to the Buddha to make a wish.





## *Chapter Three*

### Chinese Buddhist Music: A Brief Overview

This chapter deals initially with the origins of Chinese Buddhist music, and briefly discusses the mythological explanation, as well as mentioning the results of recent musicological research. It briefly explains the history of Buddhist music and its percussion notation. The final section gives an account of the ceremonial instruments used in the Fo Kuang temples and also provides illustrations.

#### 1. Origins

According to tradition, Chinese Buddhist music originated from the sky. During the Wei dynasty (220-265 AD), the Emperor Tsao-Chi was climbing mount Yushan in north-eastern China and heard beautiful melodies. He was deeply touched by the clean, pure and harmonious melodies, and copied them down, later setting Buddhist liturgy to it. During the Liang dynasty (502-557 AD), the Emperor Liang Wu Di was the first to have these 'Buddhist hymns' sung during a service or Dharma Function, and their popularity grew to the point where, in the Tang dynasty (618-907 AD), they could be heard outside the temple in secular places as well.<sup>1</sup>

A more plausible theory for the origin of Chinese Buddhist music is that when, in the first century AD, Buddhism was introduced into China from India, that elements of Indian Buddhist music were assimilated into traditional Chinese music to create the first forms of Chinese Buddhist music.<sup>2</sup> Research by Chen Jiabin and Tian

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<sup>1</sup>Lin Yi-Tsei, "Buddhist Music," *Merit Times*, trans. Tracy Chen, Nov. 2000: n.p.

<sup>2</sup>Soiti Iwata "Buddhist Music with Reference to Ceremony," *Music Cultures in Interaction*, eds. Mabuchi Usaburo and Yamaguti Osamu (Tokyo: Academia, 1986) 61.

Qing also support this hypothesis. Chen published a paper in 1981 proposing that many of the melodies found in Chinese Buddhist temples were preserved in a similar form to those used in the Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD). Tian suggested that Chinese Buddhist music was not an indigenous product of China, but also that its origins can be traced back to India. He states further, that it underwent a period of gradual sinicization during the third to sixth centuries AD, and agrees, that some present examples of Chinese Buddhist music show that they were derived from similar music in the Tang dynasty.<sup>3</sup> At around that same time, much of the liturgy was also translated from Sanskrit into contemporary Chinese.

## 2. Chinese Buddhist Liturgy and Music

The liturgy of Chinese Buddhism has been divided into northern and southern styles since the sixth and seventh centuries AD. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, (fourteenth to twentieth centuries AD), these styles eventually merged. Since then, “the style adopted in most Chinese temples was that of the Tianning temple in Changzhou, Jiangsu province; as a result, psalmody throughout the country shows broad similarities.”<sup>4</sup>

By the time of the Ming Dynasty, all Chinese temples used a standardised text for the two main types of services held in the temples; that of the daily service, *Chanmen-risong* or *Fojiao-niansongji*, and funeral rites for the dead, *Yujiayankou*.

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<sup>3</sup> Jiabin Chang. “Wutaishan Simiao Yinyue Chutan” [A Preliminary Study of the Music of Wutaishan Mountains]. *Yinyue Yanjiu* 2. 1981 Reprinted in *Minzu Yinyue Jigou Lunwen Ji* Beijing: Zhongyang Yinyue Xueyuan Xuebau She (1986): 89-103, and Qing Tian. “Fojiao Yinyue De Huahua.” [The Sinicization Of Buddhist Music]. *Shijie Zongjiao Yanjiu*. 3. (1983): n.p. As found in Qing Tian and Hwee San Tan, “Recent Trends in Buddhist Music Research in China,” *British Journal of Ethnomusicology* 3 (1994): 67.

<sup>4</sup> Qing Tian and Hwee San Tan, 64.

These texts, or sutra books, possessed notation for the percussion parts and show when the instruments are to be hit in relation to the words, but unlike the Vajrayana Buddhism, as in Tibet, they have no melodic notation.<sup>5</sup> The Fo Kuang organisation uses these same texts but have published their own versions with English translations. These are used to chant from by the congregation during the service.

*Fanbei* is an all-encompassing term to describe the liturgical music used in Chinese Buddhist ceremonies, and is generally accepted to be the chanting of the sutras accompanied by one or several percussion instruments.<sup>6</sup> The chanting can be separated into two broad types, *zan* (hymns) and *ji* (verses), and *jing* (sutras) and *zhou* (incantations).<sup>7</sup>

*Zan* and *ji* is generally where the clergy and congregation chant standard melismatic<sup>8</sup> melodies in unison from the sutra book. Percussion instruments usually accompany and frequently punctuate stanza endings.

*Jing* and *zhou*, however, is where the clergy and congregation sing virtually a word for each note and independently from each other in a style called by some 'wave singing'.<sup>9</sup> Each individual maintains the same speed and rhythm as everyone else, but note pitchings are different. Sections within the service sung in this style normally start slowly, but gradually increase in speed until the end. The *muyu*, or woodblock, is played almost constantly, note for note with the congregation, and sets the speed.

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<sup>5</sup> Soiti Iwata, 62.

<sup>6</sup> Qing Tian and Ilwee San Tan. 63.

<sup>7</sup> T.H. Tsai, "Change and Continuity: A Study of Chinese Buddhist Music in England," diss., U of Sheffield, 2000, 2.

<sup>8</sup> Melisma - A group of notes sung to a single syllable.

<sup>9</sup> Personal Interviews with informants 'B', 2.6.01, and 'H', 19.6.01.

Historically, the use of melodic instruments in the services was limited to a few temples, with the majority using only percussion instruments to accompany the liturgy. Melodic instruments were mostly used for funeral processions and longer services such as *Fang Yankou*, or 'Feeding the Hungry Ghosts'.<sup>10</sup>

### 3. The Ritual Instruments

Only percussion instruments are used to accompany the liturgy in the Fo Kuang temples, and this section will give an account of each one as used during the service. They will be divided into two sections similar to the Hornbostel and Sachs' classification of instruments, in this case, only idiophones and membranophones.

#### Idiophones

Idiophones are instruments that are sounded by "the substance of the instrument itself, owing to its solidity and elasticity . . . without requiring stretched membranes or strings."<sup>11</sup> These are instruments that produce their sound by vibrations that resonate within themselves, such as a piece of wood, a strip of metal, or a hollow chamber. Idiophones are subdivided into categories of how the initial cause of these vibrations is brought about, such as being struck, scraped, plucked, rubbed (friction), or blown. These categories are further subdivided according to the generic characteristics of the instrument. An example is divisions according to physical shape, whether their shape is tubular, is a vessel, a stick, a gong, a bell, or like a plaque.

<sup>10</sup> Qing Tian and Hwee San Tan. 64.

<sup>11</sup> Erich M. von Hornbostel and Curt Sachs, [1914] 1961. "Systematik der Musikinstrumente: Ein Versuch." *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 14. Trans. A. Baines and K. Wachsmann. "A Classification of Musical Instruments." *Galpin Society Journal* 14: 3-29. Margaret J. Kartomi, *On Concepts and Classifications of Musical Instruments* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1990) 169.

Hornbostel and Sachs adopted a numerical system of classification similar to the Dewey decimal library classification system, which shows the structure and physical function of the instrument.<sup>12</sup> These classifications will be placed after each instruments' name.

### ***Ban* 111.221**

The *ban* is a 'percussion plaque' and is a woodblock that is hit with a mallet. It is a 25 x 30cm. Rectangular slab of wood, about two centimetres thick, and suspended by a string through two holes bored at the top. Its function is to announce when a service is about to start, and it is hit several times with a solid wood mallet, about thirty centimetres long, outside the entrances to the temple. The wood is not varnished or lacquered.

### ***Muyu* 111.2**

The *muyu* is a 'percussion idiophone' woodblock, and comes in two sizes. The smallest is handheld and about fifteen centimetres across, while the other rests on a table and is sixty centimetres across. Both are struck with a wooden mallet that has a ball-shaped piece of rubber on the end. The mallet that is used to hit the small *muyu* is about twenty centimetres long and the large one is about thirty. The *muyu* is carved in the stylised shape of a fish, which reminds practitioners that, as a fish never closes its eyes and is always awake, so should they be in their dedication.<sup>13</sup> They are normally kept to the left of the altar and played by one of the assisting clergy members. The

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<sup>12</sup> Brown, Howard Mayer, and Francis Palmer. "Idiophone." *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Ed. Stanley Sadie. V.12. (London: Macmillan, 2001) 73-74.

<sup>13</sup> Man Chien, Ed. *Entry into the Profound: A First Step to Understanding Buddhism* (Sydney: Fo Kuang Publishing, 2000) 29.

handheld one, as it is more mobile, can be used in processions or outdoor ceremonies, but they are both used in services held within the temple. The larger one punctuates points of reference within the liturgy, usually when a section is ended and is to be repeated, and also governs the tempi of the chanting in the ‘wave singing’ section of the liturgy, by starting slowly, and gradually speeding up towards the end.

### ***Da Qing* 111.242.11**

A metal open-ended bowl called the *da qing* is classified as a ‘resting bell’, as it is placed on a cushion, with its mouth facing upwards. It is about thirty centimetres high and fifty centimetres wide and is hit with a short wooden mallet twenty centimetres in length. The end that strikes the bowl is covered in a black rubber sheath. The handle is turned wood, to fit easily into the hand’s grip, and is covered with a brown lacquer. It was not cast in a mould but is made of beaten brass and covered in a black lacquer. It is normally kept on the right hand side of the altar and played by another assisting clergy member. It has a similar function to the large *muyu* in punctuating phrase endings, which often helps devotees to know where they are in the chant. The *Da Qing* comes in a smaller size as well, but is rarely used in the ceremonies. Beyond size, the only difference is that the lacquer of the mallet’s handle is red, instead of brown.

### ***Chazi* 111.142**

The *chazi* are ‘concussion idiophones’, or, as more commonly known, handheld cymbals. These are rubbed against each other, often in a circular motion, rather than clashed together. They come in a pair, are made of brass and have a diameter of about fifteen centimetres. The central boss is around two centimetres

high, with a drilled hole in the centre through which an attached knotted piece of string allows the player to hold it. These are usually played by the *muyu* player in sections where the wood block is not required, and they often coincide in sound with the *gu*, or drum.

### ***Yin Qing* 111.242.121**

Perhaps the most religiously important instrument is the *yin qing*, or handheld bell that is played by the *Heshang*, who leads the service. It is classified as a ‘suspended bell struck from the outside’, and is made of brass. Its striker is a tapered brass rod about thirty centimetres long. The bell is screwed to another tapered brass rod that the player holds. A plastic sheath covers the part where the hand holds the rod, but not where the hand holds the striker. This rod is also about thirty centimetres long, and the bell is about five centimetres high with a circumference of eight centimetres. It is struck to indicate to the congregation when to perform a prostration to the Buddha.

### ***Tang Zi* 111.242.121**

The *tang zi* has similar dimensions and performs a similar function, except it consists of a small brass plate held by cotton in a circular frame of metal on the end of a stick. It is also a ‘suspended bell struck from the outside’. Its striker, however, is made of a white tapered plastic strip that ends in a small ‘barrel-shaped’ piece of plastic. A decorative strip of gold coloured paint has been painted around the striker. The handheld rod that suspends the circular frame is ornately turned wood, lacquered red in colour. The clergy member on the immediate right of the *Heshang* usually plays this instrument when he or she is not playing the *da qing*. The *tang zi* is often played

in unison with the *yin qing* and, due to this, is often treated as an optional instrument, not necessarily played in each service.

### ***Tiao Qing* 111.242.121**

The *tiao qing* is another ‘suspended bell struck from the outside’ and is played by the clergy member on the extreme right of the altar. It is paired with the *gu*, is suspended by the same frame that surrounds the *gu*, and is played by the same performer. The bell is made of brass, about fifteen centimetres high with a diameter at the base of around seven centimetres. It is played by a different striker to the *gu*, is similar to the *tang zi*’s striker in all, except colour, where it is black, and is undecorated by the gold strip.

### **Membranophones**

Membranophones are instruments that are ‘excited by tightly stretched membranes.’<sup>14</sup> They are further subdivided into instruments that are struck, rubbed (friction), and those that resonate in sympathy with another sound. As in idiophones, they are further subdivided, and a numeric code is applied for each generic characteristic.<sup>15</sup>

### ***Gu* 211.222**

The *gu* is the only example of a membranophone in the liturgical instruments of the Fo Kuang organisation. It can be further classified as a ‘barrel shaped drum’. It is one metre high and has a diameter at the ends of around forty centimetres, and of

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<sup>14</sup> Margaret J. Kartomi, 169.

<sup>15</sup> Brown, Howard Mayer, and Frances Palmer. “Membranophone.” *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Ed. Stanley Sadie. V.12. (London: Macmillan, 2001) 378-379.



sixty centimetres at the waist. Covered by a tacked membrane at both ends, it is suspended in a lacquered wooden frame, which also holds the *tiao qing*.

Some examples of the frame can be highly ornate with mythical figures such as a dragon's head carved in the frame, to hold the *tiao qing* out of its mouth. The author has also seen more modest frames in temples, where the form of the frame is more functional than decorative, and even in one instance, where the drum was only twenty centimetres high.<sup>16</sup> The striker is very similar in size and shape to a Western snare drum stick, and is unpainted, wooden, and slightly tapered at the end with a small knob at the end that is used to strike the drum. It is around thirty centimetres long.

The main use of the *gu* is to perform the introductions to each section, unless they go on without a break. It also is frequently paired in sound with the *chazi*, to indicate the beginning of new words used in the chant. The sound of the *gu* symbolises the end of the cycle of rebirth when Nirvana is attained by those who have achieved enlightenment.<sup>17</sup>

When these instruments are struck, most are left to ring undampened, except where notated, often at the end of phrases. All these instruments come under the collective title of dharma instruments, as their sound is considered to be a form of offering to the Buddhas and other heavenly beings.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Fieldwork conducted in the period February 2001 to February 2002.

<sup>17</sup> Man Chien, 29.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 30-31.

The aim of these three chapters has been to establish the background and tradition to which the Christchurch temple belongs. Such efforts are necessary, as many of the reasons, why musical change has been initiated in the Christchurch temple have been to do with these ‘inherited’ and often historical factors. An example of this is the confused state in which Taiwanese Buddhism existed in, in 1949. This present research will show that this confused state has changed little in contemporary Taiwanese immigrants. This is mostly due to the Christchurch temple’s attendance oriented policy, by acting as a ‘culture club,’ rather than concentrating on Buddhist education, as Hsing Yun initially set out to do.

## Ritual Instruments Used in the Services

Photographs courtesy of Nan Tien temple, Sydney.  
 Extracted from *Entry into the Profound: A First Step to Understanding Buddhism*.  
 Man Chien (Ed.). pp. 29-31.

1. *Muyu* in Two sizes.



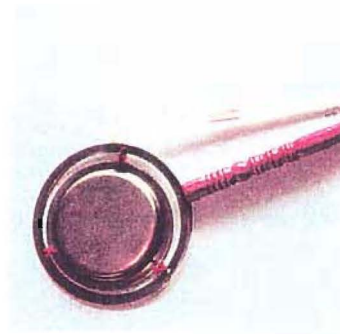
2. *Da Qing*



3. *Yin Qing*



4. *Tang Zi*



5. *Chazi*



6. *Tiao Qing* and *Gu*



## *Chapter Four*

### Change in the Music Tradition

As the principal aim of this research has been to show what change has taken place through tangible musical events, such as differences in instrumentation or addition of musical material, the most useful medium to show this has been the content and production of the liturgical chant as used in the Christchurch temple.

When a section of the Christchurch temple's rendition of an anthem, is compared to a commercial cassette tape recording of the same section, as sung in the main temple of the Fo Kuang organisation in Taiwan, many differences appear that show how distant the Christchurch temple's music has come from its parent temple.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter begins by briefly setting out basic expectations for the chant that is used within the Christchurch temple, based on the Incense Anthem on which this research has focused, and such musical factors as tempi, phrasing, tonal centre and instruments. This 'template' has been developed from the Fo Kuang Shan temple in Taiwan, the 'parent' tradition. It is necessarily brief and purports to be a commentary rather than an in-depth analysis. The main corpus of this work concentrates on the Christchurch temple's chant, and change that has happened to it, making it different

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<sup>1</sup> The section of the anthem, as sung in the Christchurch temple, comes from a field recording of the Sunday service made on June 10, 2001. The rendition of the same sections from Taiwan are from a commercial cassette tape called *Lunch Service*, n.d., recorded in the Fo Kuang Shan temple. As this is a commercial recording, the percussion voluntary that begins the service is absent, and the congregation initially uses a metronome to establish the right tempo. The author has been assured by all the members of the clergy that have been interviewed for this research, that these are the only differences on the tape from a normal afternoon service in Fo Kuang Shan. As it has been made for people to chant along with and meditate to, everything else has been strictly maintained.

from Fo Kuang Shan chant. This section also explains some of the particular features of the Buddhist musical tradition like ‘wave singing’ and staggered breathing.

The second section of this chapter briefly details similarities between the two temple’s renditions. The main section in this chapter, however, covers in detail the principal differences discovered between the two recordings, and shows these through detailed transcriptions.

### **1. Template for the Incense Anthem *Chieh Ting***

Before change can be effectively identified in the Christchurch temple, clear parameters and descriptions of the Buddhist music tradition from Taiwan must be set out. This section principally deals with the Incense Anthem *Chieh Ting*, which occurs in the ordinary ceremony of the Fo Kuang temples, and concentrates on the first two sections, the Anthem and the Invocation. As was mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, these two sections are the most contrasting within the entire anthem, and embrace most of the characteristics that distinguish the Buddhist musical tradition.

A brief commentary on the anthem as sung in the Fo Kuang Shan temple will serve as the template. Features of the anthem, such as performers, tessitura, key, tempi, rhythm, and form will be covered. This will set a standard, by which the Christchurch temple, as a descendant of the Fo Kuang Shan temple, can be compared.

## Performers

In the example from Taiwan, there is a large congregation of at least thirty people, men and women, led by the *Heshang*, who in this case is a monk. Three other clergy members play the Dharma instruments, the *da qing*, *chazi*, both sizes of the *muyu*, and the *yin qing*. In this performance, the *tangzi* is omitted, as it is not an essential part, and if used, it usually doubles the *yin qing*.

In his 2000 thesis, Tsai gives a rendition of an early morning service in Beihai Temple, Taiwan, in May 1998, showing how many of the sangha are normally involved in a typical service.

It was about twenty past four in the morning. Some monks [At least two] who were in charge of preparing [the] lamps and the joss sticks before the beginning of the morning ceremony, had already carried out these duties in the main hall. For ten minutes, until half past four, the big bell and the big drum which are located in the main hall . . . are beaten. . . . [Three] At the same time, a monk [Four] beats a *ban* (a kind of wood block) around the temple to wake up the other monks to prepare for the morning ceremony. When he returns to the main hall, he signals the ending of the preparatory stage together with the drum player.

Another monk [Five] leads all the remaining monks of the temple to the main hall, performing at the same time on the *yinqing* (hand bell). Two rows of the monks pass through into the hall in a very orderly manner [I can't imagine them rushing in at that hour!] from the entrance at the back of the hall. They face each other and wait for the Heshang, who is the leader of the ceremony, to start the ceremony.

When the Heshang arrives, all the monks turn their direction from facing the Buddha statues and make a kowtow to [the] Buddha, three times, while the signal is given out by the *yinqing*[,] and the morning ceremony proper begins, [and is repeated again in the afternoon and evening.]”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Tsai, T.H. “Change and Continuity,” 15-18.

Although this quotation does not deal specifically with the Incense Anthem, it represents the typical arrangement for any service in a large temple in Taiwan. It also shows that there are at least five clergy involved in an exemplary daily service. Several people are involved in preparations for the actual service, like beating the temple's main bell to wake the monks, and the monk who hits the *ban* to announce the beginning of the service, and other clergy members who officiate in the service, and play the Dharma instruments.

### **Vocal Range**

The vocal range for the women in this recording of the Fo Kuang temple is approximately F below middle C, to C above middle C. The men sing approximately the same range an octave below.

### **Tonal Centre**

The tonal centre of the Anthem in the example from Taiwan is loosely based on the pitches of A flat, B flat, C, E flat, F, and G. A flat was chosen as the principal note to begin this collection of pitches as it was often the note at the top of the range for a phrase. Much of the decoration of the melodic line was also derived from ornamentation around A flat. Phrases in this example often ended on the overtone, or second most played note of E flat, rather than A flat, thereby making most of the cadences open-ended.

The sequential listing of these notes in the previous paragraph was arbitrary, and should not be seen as suggestive of a relationship between the Western sense of 'key and tonality', and the chanting found in the contemporary Taiwanese Buddhist

temples concentrated on in this research. The studied chant does show clear links to the Asian tradition, of which it is part of, through the use of a hexatonic scale, based on the tonal centre of A flat. Further evidence is that in the first section of the Incense Anthem, the melodies are unharmonised, other than the men of the congregation, who sing an octave lower.

### **Tempi**

The recording of the Anthem in the Taiwanese example begins at  $\text{♩} = 50$  and when the congregation joins the *Heshang*, it speeds up and slightly fluctuates between a steady  $\text{♩} = 58$  and  $\text{♩} = 60$ . These speeds are maintained throughout the example. In the Invocation section, the tempi begins at  $\text{♩} = 70$  and gradually increases in speed to  $\text{♩} = 220$ .

### **Rhythm and Decoration**

The rhythm in the example is very energetic and helps to maintain the flow of the often long melismatic phrases. The majority of rhythmic divisions consist of quavers and semi-quavers. Triplets occur frequently, and are often syncopated by the last note of the three being tied onto the following note. Dotted rhythms are rare, but when used are very effective as a decoration to descending passages. This type of rhythm also occurs when a held long note is decorated by a microtonal vocal inflection upwards, and back down to the held note. Even though most of the cadences are open-ended, the final note is usually very long in comparison to what has been before, and thereby confirms a feeling of cadence.



## Form

The Anthem is basically in two parts. It begins with a percussion voluntary, and a vocal introduction by the *Heshang*, and is joined by the congregation. The first section is sub-divided into three sections, all with different words. The first two are strophic in nature, where the sections are repeated virtually the same, except with different words. The third begins exactly the same as the second section, but inserts new material of the same basic rhythmic dimensions and adds four bars. The second part consists of three repeated vocal phrases that are again treated strophically, but with different material as to what was used in the first part. These sections are virtually identical, except for the final three bars of the third section which slow down through augmentation.<sup>3</sup>

## Phrasing

Individual phrasing is difficult to identify due to the 'free chant' style of the piece. When the Anthem was transcribed, however, phrasing became obvious, as it was very regimented, with usually four beats per word. The ending phrases that incorporate long ending notes are usually three bars long, or three lots of four beats. Several times, the phrases are stretched to cover two bars of four beats.

When tracing the overall contour of the phrases in the two parts of the Anthem, the first three sections generally follow an arch contour. Typically, each of these initial three sections, are further divided in to two, with both following the pattern of starting low in the range and gradually building to a climax in the centre of the subsection, then descending to usually the low starting note. The second part of

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<sup>3</sup> By using crotchet movement instead of the usual quaver movement.

the Anthem follows a different pattern, similar to a wave with regular troughs and peaks. It starts in the middle of the vocal range, builds, then goes to the bottom of the range and ascends again. This pattern is repeated several times, finally ending in the higher end of the vocal range.

### Wave Singing

Wave singing is a fascinating feature of Buddhist chant, where everyone sings an independent melody or part separate from anyone else. Rhythm, tempi and words all occur strictly at the same time in each part, with the intention to create a great wash of sound that ebbs and flows, hence 'wave singing'. The text that is chanted maintains a certain amount of unity, and gives shape to the phrases as the final syllable is often longer in duration and has a characteristic rhythmic pattern. In the Incense Anthem, *Chieh Ting*, wave singing occurs in the second section, the Invocation.

Tsai describes wave singing (calling it *chuandou* or *zhishu*) by saying that

[E]very participant follows the [initial] pitch which is set by the *weinuo* [or *Heshang*] to chant tutti. After a few seconds, everyone gradually chants differently. The tempo controlled by the *muyu* player gets faster. At the end of the sentences, the tempo gets slower and the chanting becomes similar in each part. In the end[,] every part returns to the same pitch.<sup>4</sup>

Tsai goes on to explain several recommendations allegedly given to beginners to help them understand how to wave sing.

Firstly, your chanting must go down if you hear someone else rising up; secondly[,] you should not stop chanting while someone else stops, and the break should not interrupt the continuity of the chant in your mind; thirdly[,] your chanting style must be similar to the wave of the sea which never has

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<sup>4</sup> T.H. Tsai, "To Write or not Write Music Down: The Transcription and Analysis of Chinese Buddhist Chanting *Pumen Pin* and *Dabei Zhou*." Part. diss., U of Sheffield, 2000. 18.

intervals between waves; fourthly[,] you should have your [own] individual style; finally, every time the chanting can be different.<sup>5</sup>

Wave singing is used in the Invocation section of the example from Taiwan, and it generally follows Tsai's points with a unison beginning started by the *Heshang*, which gradually speeds up as people follow their own melodic lines. On this recording, the congregation begins by intoning a unison pattern that repeats itself several times, with people gradually separating and singing their own pitch. While the opening pitches can be followed, individual pitches eventually become indeterminate, with an occasional monotone drone-like sound coming through as perhaps a composite blend of all pitches. With a sizeable congregation, there is no doubt that quite frequently some people will be singing the same pitch and perhaps even following the same note-path, yet this is what gives the desired 'wave effect' as people drift in and out of consonant and dissonant note clusters.

### **Other Points**

Other points worth mentioning in this brief commentary are that all the words are highly melismatic in the Anthem section. In the Invocation, however, the setting is usually syllabic, except for the last word of each sentence, which has two beats. Nowhere is there any harmony in the Western sense, other than perhaps the changes in the tone clusters in the Invocation section, and there are no changes in dynamics.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 18.

## 2. Similarities Between the Two Examples

There is much, however, that links the music in the Christchurch and the Fo Kuang Shan temples, such as rhythm, where the note values in the Christchurch example were basically doubled in time, because of the very slow speed of the chanting. The Christchurch example does, however, maintain the essential rhythmic movement of its 'parent' temple in Taiwan. Melodic contours were also nearly all preserved, as well as the two part form of the Anthem, with the first divided into three strophic sections, and the second into two.

Although originated from a different collection of pitches, the Fo Kuang Shan example being based around A flat, and the Christchurch example based around F #, they both possess similar characteristics, with regard to tonal centres. Both have an easily recognisable hierarchy of pitches, where the tonal centre can be easily identified, as it is the most frequently performed, and is also often the highest pitch in a phrase. The second-most performed pitch can also be easily selected in both examples, as the overtone. The Christchurch and Fo Kuang Shan temples also share the experience of having most of the cadences ending in the overtone, thereby being open ended.

The members of the congregation in the Christchurch temple, who were all initiates, had a similar vocal range to the congregation in the Fo Kuang Shan temple, that consisted of trained members of the sangha. The vocal range for the Christchurch congregation was D # below middle C to the A above. Both congregations had around twelve notes in their range. Members in the congregation of either sex may have

dropped down or up an octave if the range of the chant went out of their range. The vocal range, therefore, is of the collective congregation, not of individuals.

### **3. Differences Between the Two Examples**

A 'note for note' comparison between two related examples of the same thing, one being the 'parent' and the other its 'progeny', provides the best indication of change between the two. In this case, a commercial recording of a service by clergy from the Fo Kuang temple in Taiwan, singing the Anthem and Invocation sections of the Incense Anthem *Chieh Ting*, is compared to the same sections as sung by the congregation and clergy of the Christchurch temple in a service on 10 June 2001.

There are several main points of difference between the two examples that showed that change had resulted after the transference of the tradition to Christchurch. These were that the Christchurch example was much slower, simpler and less decorated, less accurate in pitch and the use of the percussion instruments, and that the basic fundamentals of Buddhist chanting like staggered breathing and 'wave singing' was frequently absent. The most striking example of change was the harmonisation of most of the Invocation Section in thirds and fourths, a feature quite alien to Chinese Buddhist chant.

#### **Change in the Personnel**

One of the most obvious examples of musical change within the liturgy of the temples in Christchurch and Taiwan is the people who lead the musical performances and play the dharma instruments. In Christchurch, there is one resident nun, yet at the Fo Kuang temples in Taiwan and in other centres around the world, there are several.

if not hundreds, in temples like Nan Tien in Sydney and the comparison temple, Fo Kuang Shan in Taiwan.<sup>7</sup>

In the Christchurch temple, however, where there is only one resident clergy member, lay people do all of these activities, except that of *Heshang*, which the nun does herself.<sup>8</sup> There is only one full service held each week on the Sunday, where the public attend, but the nun maintains the traditional three services a day by herself, playing several instruments at the same time.

### Tempi

Change in the speed is the most obvious factor that separates the two examples. As mentioned before, the Anthem of the Taiwanese example begins at ♩ = 50, and when the congregation joins the *Heshang*, it speeds up and fluctuates between a steady ♩ = 58 and ♩ = 60. These speeds are maintained throughout the example. In the Christchurch example, however, the speed is very erratic, starting on ♩ = 40, and going through several speeds including ♩ = 50, 65, 70, and 80. Only in the Invocation section where the *muyu* beats a steady tempo, is the speed relatively steady, yet this is the section in the example from Taiwan where the speed is perpetually getting faster. In the Anthem of the Christchurch example, however, there is an enormous amount of rubato with very little consistency or conformity to one speed.

These following examples show that although the Christchurch example appears to have faster speeds, this is in fact not the case, as note for note, it is virtually

<sup>7</sup> Personal Interview with informant 'G', 28.10.01.

<sup>8</sup> For a breakdown of the service as held in the Christchurch temple, see Chapter Two, page 28.

always twice as long as the example from Taiwan. Women sing at the written pitch,  
and men sing an octave below.

Example 1. 16 and 41-43 (Taiwan example always first)

16  $\bullet = 50$

Fen

41  $\bullet = 50$

Fen

Example 2. 18-19 and 45-48

18  $\bullet = 50$

Ch'ung

T'ien

45  $\bullet = 50$

Ch'ung

T'ien

Example 3. 48 and 96-98

48  $\bullet = 50$

Chi

96  $\bullet = 70$

Chi

## Example 4. 62 and 122-124

62  $\bullet = 50$

Mien

122  $\bullet = 70$

Mien

Although this pattern is the norm, there are minor variations and exceptions where the Christchurch example is not always twice as long, note for note, or there is a difference in the total number of notes.

## Example 5. 17 and 43-45

17  $\bullet = 50$

Ch'i

43  $\bullet = 50$

Ch'i

## Example 6. 72-73 and 142-146

72  $\bullet = 50$

P'u

142

P'u

144



## Simplification

Because the corresponding note values in the Christchurch example are generally twice as long as in the example from Taiwan, much of the rhythmic vitality and harmonic decoration is absent. This results in rather ponderous melodies shorn of the rhythmic and harmonic contrasts that make the Taiwan example so expressive and lively. One of the most obvious instances of the difference between the two examples, is that microtonal notes are very rare in the Christchurch example, but are a common decoration in the example from Taiwan.

The following examples point out these differences, with the first two showing how the chant from Taiwan is highly decorated, yet the same passages in the chant from Christchurch are very plain and simple in comparison. The second pair shows two places where microtonal pitches are used to decorate a long held note, but in the Christchurch example, are unadorned. The Christchurch chant in example eight shows an exception to this generalisation, where a microtonal pitch is used, except not as a decoration, but more of an out of tune note. Microtonal pitches are indicated on the score by an arrowhead, ( $\wedge$  or  $\vee$ ), in front of the affected note, and represents either a quarter-tone up or down.

### *Rhythmic Decoration*

Example 7. 28-30 and 62-67

The image displays three staves of musical notation, each representing a different example of chant. The first staff, labeled '28' at the beginning, shows a melody in G major (one sharp) with a complex rhythmic pattern of many sixteenth notes, all under a single long slur. Below the staff is the label 'Ch'eng'. The second staff, labeled '62', also in G major, shows a similar decorated melody with many sixteenth notes and a long slur, with 'Ch'eng' written below. The third staff, labeled '65', is in G major and shows a much simpler melody with fewer notes, also under a long slur, with 'Ch'eng' written below. The notation is in treble clef.

## Example 8. 76-78 and 150-158

76   
Mo

78   
Ho

150   
Mo Ho

155   
Ho

*Melodic Decoration*

## Example 9. 15 and 38-40

15   
(Hsiang)

38   
(Hsiang)

## Example 10. 26-27 and 58-62

26   
Ch'ien

58   
Ch'ien

## Phrase Symmetry

Because of the continuous flow in a 'free chant' style, there is no strong emphasis on a defined metricity in either example, as in strong downbeats. The words in the example from Taiwan, however, regularly fit into symmetrical four-beats in a bar pattern, which greatly assists the singers in knowing where they are in the phrase, and when next to expect a word change. A change in the words usually happens on the first beat of these four-beat patterns. The Christchurch example does not possess this set form, and its words are often placed outside any regular pattern, as its phrases often consist of uneven numbers. The fact that the tempi within any given phrase or word is so erratic also hinders the singers.

The following illustrations show how the phrases in the example from Taiwan neatly fit into bars of four beats, with a word change on the beginning beat. The phrases in the Christchurch example, however, are of different time values, the first eight beats, the second six, and the third and fourth are seven beats long. This means that the symmetrical phrase structure of four beats a word or phrase, is lost. This is further evidence of how the Christchurch temple has distanced itself from the tradition in Taiwan, where the evenness of the phrases greatly assist the congregation in chanting, but in Christchurch, the unevenness is another hindrance to an inexperienced congregation.

Example 11. 16-19 and 41-48





### Accuracy

Because the first group is 'professional' and has studied and practised Buddhist chanting for many years and the other is made up of one nun and a congregation of noviciates, a number of differences can be expected between the two with regard to accuracy.

As alluded to, there is a great deal of miss-pitching and incorrect rhythms by many of the noviciates in the Christchurch example as they attempt to follow the nun; far more than in the Taiwan example, where these mistakes are rare. As the aim, however, of the transcriptions has been to capture the overall picture of the performance, and therefore, mainly ignoring stray notes and slight aberrations, these have not been noted. What can be easily transcribed, however, is the percussion instruments and where they differ from the musical scores that the players read from during the ceremony.

The scores that the percussionists read from contain indications for when to hit each percussion instrument in relation to the word that is being sung. These are represented by symbols that show which instrument to hit, like ○ - drum, ◎ - *da qing* (bell bowl) and | - *tiao chung* (suspended bell). Unfortunately, there is no indication when to hit the *muyu* or woodblock, but it is reasonable to expect that the

Christchurch example could be similar to the Taiwan example in this respect. (See Appendix Three for a copy of the score as used in the Christchurch temple)

Overall, and similar to the example from Taiwan, the Christchurch example is very like the score with which the percussionists work. There are, however, quite consistent omissions of notes, misalignments where the percussion phrase does not match the vocal line exactly, and the omission of the *da qing*, or bell-bowl that often acts as a 'phrase-end marker' and the total omission of the hand cymbals. The example from Taiwan is not perfect either when compared to the score, but in this case, notes are somewhat energetically added, rather than omitted through carelessness.

The first example shows how in the same passage of chant, the percussion players in the Christchurch temple have omitted several notes. Remembering that two bars in the Taiwan example, can equal four bars in the Christchurch example, it is clear to see that both examples begin with a strike on the *gu*, or drum, but only the example from Taiwan divides the phrase in half with a strike on the *tiao qing*, or hand bell. The Christchurch percussionists unevenly divide the phrase by striking the *tiao qing* in the second quarter of the phrase, upsetting the strict division adhered to by the Taiwanese percussionists. Further differences in the Christchurch example is the total omission, due to limited musicians, of the *chazi*, or small cymbals, and the omission of the second note of the *tiao qing*, which divided the phrase.

# Omission of Chazi

Example 12. 60-61 and 118-121

61

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Shu

118

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Shu

120

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Mien

## Misalignment of Phrases

In this example, the *gu* and *chazi* both punctuate the changes in the words, and the *tiao qing* is on the offbeat. In the Christchurch example, the *gu*'s extra beat and the late and on the beat entry of the *tiao qing* could easily disorientate an inexperienced singer. The *chazi* is also omitted.

## Example 13. 32-33 and 68-72

32

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and *Heshang*

Je \_\_\_\_\_ Tsai \_\_\_\_\_

68 *a tempo*

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and *Heshang*

Je \_\_\_\_\_

71

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and *Heshang*

*rit.* 3 *a tempo*

Tsai \_\_\_\_\_ Chin \_\_\_\_\_

*Omission of Instrument* (In this case, the *da qing* or bell-bowl.)

Example 14. 80-81 and 186-188

80 *accl.*

Tiao Qing and Gu

Chazi

Muyu and Da Qing

Congregation and Heshang

81

186

Tiao Qing and Gu

Muyu and Da Qing

Congregation and Heshang

Sa Na Mo

Sa Na

### Staggered Breathing

Staggered breathing exists where singers breathe individually within a phrase to give an impression of seamlessness. The amorphous style of this singing has a religious significance in Buddhism, as it and participation in it brings the congregation together as one spiritual body.<sup>9</sup> Within the Buddhist liturgy, stanzas are often sung in this way, one after the other without a break, with the only musical indication that a new sentence has begun being a melodic repetition.

<sup>9</sup> Personal Interview with informant 'H', 19.6.01.



The example from Taiwan has only two places where everyone stops to collect a breath mid-phrase, outside the set rests in the music, as at least one person is singing all the time. As these exact same places occur in the Christchurch example, it can be safe to assume that they normally occur. The Christchurch example, however, has several more collective breathing points where everyone stops, perhaps due to its exhaustively long phrases. While most of these occur mid-phrase, two occur at the end of phrases and destroy the 'seamlessness' of the chanting and the flow-on of the sentences. As this seamless style of singing has important mystical connotations, its absence from the Christchurch temple shows how far the temple has developed from its roots in Taiwan, as well as showing the level of practical Buddhist knowledge amongst the temple's members.

*Mid-phrase Collective Breathing Point*

Example 15. 58-59 and 114-118

58



Yeh

114



Yeh

Example 16. 52-54 and 104-108

52



Fang

104



Fang

### *End Phrase Collective Breathing Point*

Example 17. 76-77 and 150-152

76 Mo Ho

150 Mo Ho

Example 18. 74-76 and 174-178

76 Mo Ho

174 Sa Mo

### **Wave Singing in the Christchurch Temple**

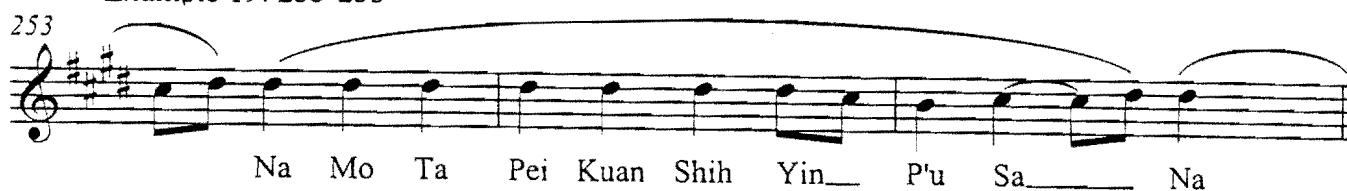
Wave singing in the Invocation section of the Incense Anthem does not generally occur in the Christchurch example. The congregation carefully follow the amplified voice of the master, as is normal in the beginning phrase that opens this section, and are generally in unison with her, excluding vocal miss-pitchings. What is different, however, is that the congregation in the Christchurch temple never progresses to singing their own individual pitches as occurred in the example from Taiwan. They continue singing this pattern over and over for the duration of the section, and because they remain in almost strict unison, they never achieve the microtonal cluster effect essential for wave singing. As the master has a microphone, and is therefore much louder, and intones the repetitive phrase over and over, changing the number of notes sung only to accommodate longer sentences, the

congregation naturally follows her. Individual pitches are easily identified in the Christchurch example because people are singing together, contrary to the tradition that the Christchurch temple comes from.

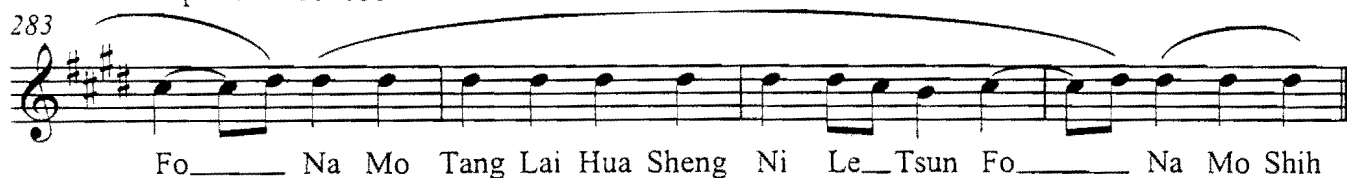
Another fundamental difference in the Invocation section of the Incense Anthem is speed. The Christchurch example plods along at speeds of ♩ = 65 to ♩ = 120, yet the example from Taiwan begins at ♩ = 70 and goes to the quite fantastic speed of ♩ = 220. These are significant differences between the two recordings, and show how far removed the Christchurch temple has come from its roots in Taiwan.

#### *Unison Singing in the Christchurch Example*

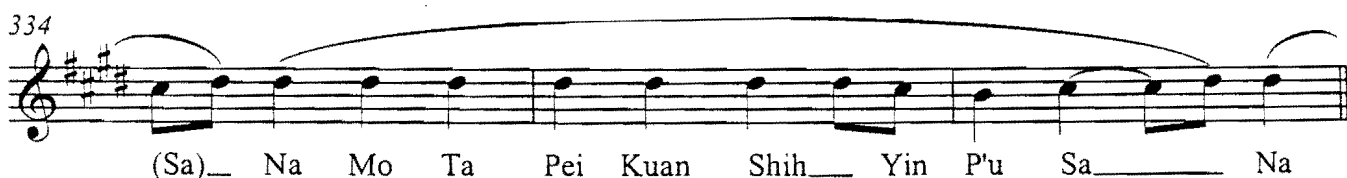
Example 19. 253-255



Example 20. 283-286



Example 21. 334-337



#### **Harmonisation**

There is one individual in the Christchurch temple's congregation called 'Miss Wang',<sup>10</sup> who often plays one of the Dharma instruments. She frequently deviates from the set pattern sung by the temple's master in the Invocation section and sings a

<sup>10</sup> Not her real name.

harmony to it in intervals of thirds or fourths. She is aware of what wave singing sounds like, but in interviews was not able to describe how to create it.<sup>11</sup> This is perhaps her personal attempt to wave sing as no other member of the congregation joins her or offers a similar deviation from the set melody.

By singing above the melody of the rest of the congregation, she inadvertently gives the melodic phrases harmonic direction, as the intervals that she sings possess a certain amount of harmonic function.

At its simplest, a harmonic phrase consists of the creation and release of harmonic tension through the beginning consonant chord, the middle dissonant chord and the final consonant chord. The consonant thirds and dissonant fourths and occasional seconds that she creates in the normally harmonically static melodies of the Invocation section now give them a 'Westernised harmonic function.'

In the example from Taiwan, the wave effect is created by transient shifts of tone and semi-tone clusters together and apart, as people's individual melodies coincide and depart. The Christchurch example, however, preserves a very pale version of wave singing by one individual harmonising with quasi-Western chords the repetitive unison melodies of the remainder of the congregation.

Example 22 on the next page shows Miss Wang's Westernised harmony as the phrase begins in unison with the congregation, then there is a repeated chord of a

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<sup>11</sup> Personal Interview with 'Miss Wang', 2.6.01.

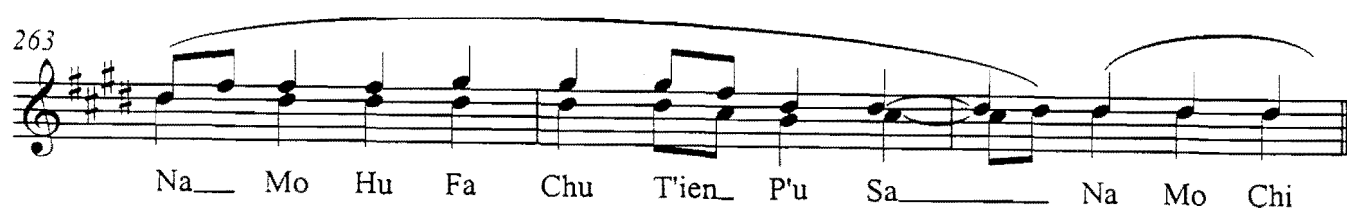
third, a repeated chord of a fourth, another fourth, a third and a second, and then a final unison. Basically, consonant – dissonant – consonant.

Example 22. 251-253



The examples from Taiwan and Christchurch were cadentially very similar in the Anthem section, where phrases were often ended with the penultimate note falling to the last note of a phrase and with the last note comparatively lower and longer than anything that had gone before. These are compositional techniques shared by both Western and Asian music. The most interesting difference between the two examples, however, was in the Invocation section, where any feel of cadence in the example from Taiwan was lost due to the transient nature of the tone and semi-tone clusters. In the Christchurch example of the Invocation section, however, in the very section where harmonic function and cadence is least expected, it occurs. The tight interconnectedness of the phrases is maintained through the fast tempi, but a Westernised cadential effect through harmony has been added. The strictly melodic and non-harmonised Chinese Buddhist music tradition has become harmonised with quasi-Western harmonies.

Example 23. 263-265



Example 24. 306-308



Example 25. 332-334



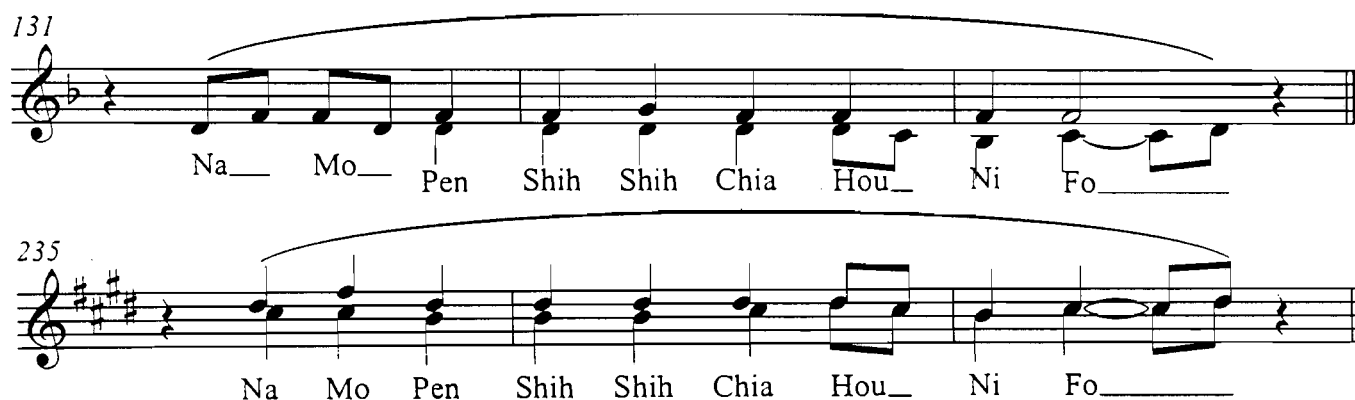
Although providing a harmonic basis to the chant, 'Miss Wang's' singing is actually a step in the right direction towards wave singing. When comparing the opening passages of the Invocation section in both examples, some individuals in the version from Taiwan do the same as 'Miss Wang' has done, and initially provide a harmony in thirds and fourths to the main melody that the *Heshang* and the rest of the congregation are singing.

The point that separates the two examples is that in the Fo Kuang temple, the opening unison melody quickly splinters into the many different pitches that create the characteristic tonal clusters. The harmonising in thirds and fourths is only temporary, as other singers also eventually leave the unison melody, and adopt their own individual pitches. The congregation in the Christchurch example, however, steadfastly maintain the unison melodies, with only 'Miss Wang', in her own way, attempting to wave sing.

The following example shows the initial similarities between the two temples in the beginning of the Invocation section, remembering that the harmony in the

example from Taiwan soon disappears, but is consistently maintained in the Christchurch temple.

Example 26. 131-133 and 235-237



### Historical Record of Harmonised Chanting

Laurence Picken wrote in 1957, that in “a small monastery in Anshuenn, Guizhou Province [of China,] novices in their teens have been heard chanting the [Buddhist] scriptures in thirds.” He suggests that this is evidence of an Indian or Tibetan ritual music influence in Chinese Buddhist chant, or that it shows a link to a “primitive stratum of folk-music.”<sup>12</sup>

Such a statement raises more questions than it answers, and unfortunately Picken does not expand on these sentences. As this is the only account that has been revealed of harmonised singing in the Chinese Buddhist liturgy outside this present research, it must be treated as an isolated event, particular to that temple at that time.

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<sup>12</sup> Picken, Laurence. “The Music of Far Eastern Asia 1. China.” *New Oxford History of Music. 1. Ancient and Oriental Music*. Ed. Egon Wellesz, (London: O.U.P., 1957) 133-134.

As has been mentioned before, the Chinese musical genre is principally non-harmonised, so any harmonisation is quite unusual, especially if it is present in the allegedly strict tradition of the Buddhist liturgy. If harmonisation of the chant can occur in Christchurch, then it is quite plausible that it could happen elsewhere. It would, however, be expected to take place under similar circumstances. The conditions present in the Christchurch temple that precipitated such change in the chant were particular to late twentieth century to early twenty-first century Taiwanese immigrants to New Zealand, and their peculiar social and religious backgrounds. These are conditions quite alien to a 1957 traditional monastery, and so if the harmonised singing actually occurred, other reasons must be found. W.E. Willmott, associate supervisor of this course of study, suggests that Guizhou is an area with several minority peoples, with non-Chinese musical traditions. It is a possibility that these traditions may have influenced the chanting in the monastery.

The fact that it was adolescent noviciates singing the harmony indicates that the adult members of the clergy did not participate, but stuck to the traditional unison singing, and so without further evidence to the contrary, it can be suggested that the noviciates eventually conformed. This is something that remains to be seen in the Christchurch temple, whether other people join 'Miss Wang' in harmonising the melody or 'Miss Wang' eventually conforms to the rest of the congregation.

Picken's supposition that the harmonised singing by the noviciates was a vestige of some ancient singing style is unlikely, as it presupposes that Buddhist music borrowed from Chinese traditional music. As was mentioned in Chapter Three, research by Jiabin Chen in 1982, and Tian Qing in 1983 suggest otherwise, in that



Chinese Buddhist music is not an indigenous product but can be traced back to its importation from India. Qing goes further to suggest that during the Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD), it was popular music styles that borrowed from Buddhist music, not the other way around.<sup>13</sup>

As there has been no further research attempted at the Anshuenn monastery to authenticate the discovery, and the account is unsubstantiated by evidence in Picken's essay, this anecdote has little effect on the present research, except to acknowledge the possibility that similar change may be occurring in other temples. During the course of this study, however, no such evidence has been found in temples of the Fo Kuang organisation, which, outside Christchurch, adhere strictly to unison singing.

### **Further Differences**

There are two further differences not covered before which are worth mentioning. One is that the master occasionally does a small melodic decoration and near the end of the anthem is joined in it by several others. This is not found in the example from Taiwan. The second is that the ending word of the Anthem section is extraordinarily drawn out, whereas the example from Taiwan ends with one note.

#### *The Master's Melodic Decoration*

Example 27. 34 and 72-73

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<sup>13</sup> Jiabin Chang, 89-103, and Qing Tian. n.p. As found in Qing Tian and Hwee San Tan, 67.

34

Chin

72

Chin

Example 28. 90-91 and 178-180

90

Mo

178

Mo

*The Last Word*

Example 29. 108 and 210-214

108

Sa.

210

Sa

A direct comparison between the two musical examples has shown clearly what differences and similarities there are between them, something that could not be as lucid if the research was based on exploring esoteric concepts and sentiments.

On one hand, these musical differences are quite extreme, like the Christchurch temple's approach to wave singing and the use of a quasi-Westernised harmony, which are quite alien to the Chinese Buddhist music tradition. On the other hand, some differences like the inaccuracy of the percussion parts and vocal miss-pitchings can be expected when one temple is staffed by experienced clergy and the other by noviciates.

What this broad spectrum of musical examples show is conclusive evidence that the Christchurch temple has become somewhat distant from its parent tradition in Taiwan and has developed within itself an 'independent' style made up of aberrations of the old.

## *Chapter Five*

### Reasons for Change in the Christchurch Temple

There are many possible explanations for the changes witnessed in the previous chapter, and there are no doubt, more reasons than could be addressed here. This chapter attempts, however, to isolate several of the more important and obvious reasons, and discusses them in detail. Such diverse factors as the religious heritage of the Taiwanese and the high turnaround of the temple's attendees all play an important role in instigating change within the Christchurch temple. The nature of the temple itself, and the personality of the resident nun also have very important parts to play in why the music tradition has changed.

The possibility of a parallel change occurring in both the Taiwan and Christchurch temples is addressed, and how the change has not come about from necessarily external stimuli, such as Western influences, but from the very disposition of the temple itself.

#### **1. The Taiwanese Religious Heritage**

##### **Religious Immaturity**

As mentioned in chapter one, the Taiwanese religious heritage and experience is extremely heterogeneous. This is mainly due to the mixing of the traditional polytheistic religions of the indigenous Taiwanese, such as the Bunun, Atayal and Paiwan tribes, with those of the exiles, colonists and refugees, who, throughout Taiwan's history, each brought their own religions such as Buddhism and Christianity.

For many of the contemporary Taiwanese, religion is still a confusing issue, especially in recent decades, which have seen Taiwan become very secular and Westernised.<sup>1</sup> The practice of Asian traditional religions, had, in the middle of the twentieth century, been looked down on as 'anti-progress', with many high political figures embracing Christianity.<sup>2</sup> Principles of Buddhism, Daoism and Confucianism, however, were amalgamated together, and lived on in traditional festivals such as New Year's celebrations, and ancestor remembrance days, celebrated by many, regardless of religious persuasion.<sup>3</sup>

Hectic urban lifestyles became widespread for most Taiwanese through the adoption of values and economic ideas from the West. Gone for many were the days of a temple oriented village, where the temple served the dual role of place of worship and community centre, where markets were held, guildhalls were based and meetings were convened. Many people were 'nominal' Buddhists or Taoists, depending on what family they were born or married into, not by any personal belief. They rarely went to temples, but often attended festivals as these had become a part of their secular culture.<sup>4</sup>

Knowledge of the fundamentals of Buddhist practice and philosophy was largely non-existent, partly because of the departure from village-based society where the temple was a constant reminder of their beliefs, as well as their lifestyles that left little time for religious practice, especially the time-consuming Buddhism which necessitated daily meditations. The disparity between the traditional religions and the

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<sup>1</sup> Personal Interviews with informants 'E', 20.6.01, 'F', 20.9.01, 'H', 19.6.01, and 'M', 2.2.02.

<sup>2</sup> Fu Chi-Ying, 81-82.

<sup>3</sup> Personal Interview with informant 'H', 19.6.01.

<sup>4</sup> Personal Interviews with informants 'E', 20.6.01, 'F', 20.9.01, and 'H', 19.6.01.

new possession-based Westernised society was perhaps another reason for the aversion some felt to the old religions. Some who did on occasion go to a service in a temple, did not differentiate between whether it was Taoist or Buddhist, but whichever was closest geographically.<sup>5</sup>

### Supporting Research

In the 1980's, Professor Chu Hai-Yuan undertook a survey of religious beliefs and attitudes in Taiwan, finding that 47% of the respondents, said that they were Buddhist. He believed, however, that most people responded in this way out of habit. He attempted to refine the question by asking if the people do any specifically Buddhist things, like maintaining a strictly vegetarian diet, chanting scriptures in private, and attending Dharma Functions at Buddhist temples, to the exclusion of any other religious or traditional belief. Only 6% of the respondents fitted the additional definition.<sup>6</sup>

The findings of this research in Christchurch, based on interviews with immigrant Taiwanese who attend the Christchurch temple, correspond with Professor Chu's findings in that the most contact with Buddhism that these people had, while still in Taiwan, was at festivals to remember their ancestors. This was an activity that was not necessarily Buddhist but a tradition entrenched in Taiwanese society. For most, their first real contact with Buddhism has been in New Zealand.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Personal Interview with informant 'F', 20.9.01.

<sup>6</sup> Hai-Yuan Chu, "Taiwan Diqu Minzhong de Zongjiao Xinyang yu Zongjiap Taidu." *Bianqianzhong de Taiwan Shehui (Taiwan Society in Transition)*. v. 2. eds. Chu Hai-Yuan and Yang Kuo-Shu. (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 1988): 241. As found in Charles Brewer Jones, "Stages in the Religious Life of Lay Buddhists in Taiwan," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 20, 2, (1997): 117-118.

<sup>7</sup> Personal Interviews with informants 'A', 19.6.01, 'B', 2.6.01, 'D', 4.6.01, 'E', 20.6.01, 'F', 20.6.01, 'H', 19.6.01, 'I', 8.6.01, and 'M', 2.2.02.

Because none of the current adult attendees of the temple in Christchurch have been attending a temple all their life, much knowledge and understanding of Buddhist philosophy and practice is missing or minimal. In traditional Buddhism, the following of the 'Five Precepts' is one of the early fundamentals that are taught by which to lead one's life.<sup>8</sup> Even in the liberal Humanistic Buddhism that the Fo Kuang organisation adheres to, they are strictly maintained, and its followers are encouraged to 'take refuge' by following them. None of the people interviewed, however, could identify all five precepts as set out by their master, Hsing Yun. The versions that they offered were very watered down. An example would be the total abstinence from intoxicating substances, for which many offered alternatives such as "no alcoholism" or "not getting drunk, [but] there's no problem drinking for health reasons."<sup>9</sup>

The researcher, T.H. Tsai, found a similar weak knowledge of Buddhist philosophy amongst the immigrant Taiwanese who attended the Fo Kuang temple in London.<sup>10</sup>

This very minimal and confused knowledge about Buddhism common to many Taiwanese, adversely affects their religious practice if they decide to attend a temple. Buddhism is a religion strongly steeped in ancient ritual and philosophy, and it is very difficult for adult initiates to familiarise themselves quickly without years of training and practice.

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<sup>8</sup> According to Hsing Yun, these are: No killing, no stealing, no sexual indulgence, no harsh words and no drugs or alcohol. Hsing Yun, "A Discussion on Ghosts" (Taichung: n.p., 1983) 33.

<sup>9</sup> Personal Interviews with informants 'A', 19.6.01, 'B', 2.6.01, 'E', 20.6.01, and 'H', 19.6.01.

<sup>10</sup> Tsai, T.H. "Change and Continuity: A Study of Buddhist Music in England." Partial M.Mus. diss., U of Sheffield, 2000, 68.

As shown in Chapter Four, there are significant differences between the liturgical chants sung in Christchurch and Taiwan. As none of the lay people interviewed for this project attended services regularly in temples when they were in Taiwan, and rarely go to temples when they return to Taiwan, they have a very limited knowledge of Buddhist philosophy and ritual. This is a fundamental reason why the Christchurch temple, although closely related to the temple in Taiwan, is so different with regard to the liturgical chant. This is shown in the examples from the Incense Anthem by the slowness and plainness of the melodies, which bear a pale resemblance to the same passages as sung in Taiwan. The strongest example of this difference, due to an ignorance of the basics of Buddhist chanting, is the Invocation Section of the Incense Anthem, where wave singing is meant to happen. In the Christchurch example, however, strictly unison melodies are repeated over and over in place of the traditional wave singing as still maintained in Taiwan.

## **2. The Type of Buddhism Practised in the Christchurch Temple.**

### **Liberal Buddhism and Temple Attendance**

The Humanistic Buddhism that the Fo Kuang tradition adheres to began its existence by challenging the old and austere values of traditional Buddhism by attempting to make it more relevant and appealing to contemporary people. To achieve this, they organised activities that involved the lay people in the temple community like choirs and study and culture groups, as well as liberalising some of the more morally strict principals that lay people had difficulty keeping, such as those that dealt with the accumulation of personal wealth.



The Fo Kuang temples eventually became centres of Chinese culture, especially in Western countries where often the local Taiwanese population would gather together to celebrate their festivals and hold their cultural activities. Frequently, a tradition such as Chinese New Year, which is normally celebrated in the home with family, will become temple-based, as many immigrants have no immediate family, but many of their friends have connections to the temple.<sup>11</sup>

As there is no moral or religious compulsion to attend a temple, not many of the Taiwanese Buddhists in Christchurch do so. The South Island Chapter of BLIA is based at the Christchurch temple and has an active membership of 150 people, with an additional 200 people attending functions such as the Chinese New Year's celebrations, yet the average attendance at the Sunday service is twenty-five. Festivals and ancestors' ceremonies attract the most people, showing that many of the attendees are still only 'cultural Buddhists', culturally obliged to go to the temple on certain days each year to pay respect to their ancestors. This compulsion is perhaps greater in New Zealand, as they are immigrants in a foreign country, far from their ancestral homes, but Charles B. Jones found a similar occurrence in the Xilian temple in Taiwan, which suggests that this behaviour is set in the Taiwanese psyche.

Out of all the activities that the temple holds during the course of one calendar year, the two longest and most well attended are those directly related with the cult of the ancestors. . . . The great majority of participants come for only a few minutes in order to have one or more paper *paiwei* (ancestral tablets) put up in the New Great Shrine Hall.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Personal Interview with informant 'E', 20.6.01.

<sup>12</sup> Charles Brewer Jones, "Stages in the Religious Life of Lay Buddhists in Taiwan," 118.

He goes on further to say that this level of commitment to Buddhism “allows one the freedom to participate in Buddhist activities, without demanding changes in any of the factors by which the individual structures his or her life.”<sup>13</sup>

Although widespread in Taiwan and New Zealand, indifferent attendance and nominal belief amongst people associated with the temple has the greatest effect on the temple in Christchurch. This is because it has the smallest population base, which packs festivals and services to do with ancestor worship, yet leaves regular Sunday services empty. By doing so, they miss out on opportunities to learn more about Buddhist philosophy and practice, opportunities more accessible in Taiwan.

### **The Effect of Commercial Recordings on the Temple's Chant**

The Fo Kuang tradition places small emphasis on the individual practice of meditation, which benefits only a few, but more on ‘pro-active Buddhism’ that involves many people through Dharma functions and charitable works. One of their aims has been to discard Buddhism’s sole identity with the temple and to get it established within families and work places and in everyday situations, not just on Sundays.<sup>14</sup>

Due to the nature of contemporary secular lifestyles, time for personal religious expression competes with work, recreation and family commitments. The Fo Kuang organisation has acknowledged this and have developed ways to capitalise on the situation. The most obvious are holding public services and festivals during the

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<sup>13</sup> Charles Brewer Jones, “Stages in the Religious Life of Lay Buddhists in Taiwan,” 18.

<sup>14</sup> Fu Chi-Ying, 368-371.

weekends instead of following the traditional lunar calendar.<sup>15</sup> One of the most financially lucrative ways has been the commercial recording of Buddhist chant, with the intention that people can listen to it while driving the car to work and while doing house and homework.

One of the natural progressions that this has undergone has been the mixing of popular music styles with traditional chant. Synthesisers and lush string writing are not uncommon, as well as various arrangements for traditional Chinese instruments and children's choirs.

The two-fold aim of getting Buddhist chant into people's everyday lives and to make money to support the organisation has been largely successful. There has been one major downside, however, in that, as lay people have been so heavily influenced by the commercial recordings of traditional Buddhist chant mixed with synthesisers, Western instruments and harmonised choruses, there is significant potential for change in the traditional liturgical chant used in the temples. This is more likely to occur in temples such as in Christchurch, where there is only one resident member of the clergy and a small congregation with minimal knowledge of Buddhist practice.

As mentioned before, one major example of difference between the two temples has been that in the Christchurch temple parts of the chant in the Invocation section were harmonised by Miss Wang. To discover why she did so, several commercial Buddhist chant recordings were borrowed from her, and on the tape that

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<sup>15</sup> An example of this being the 2002 Chinese New Year's celebrations, which were held on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February instead of the traditional date, Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> February.

she listened to the most, harmonised singing of the chant occurred. It was a recording of the 'Shanghai Juvenile Broadcast Chorus' singing an arrangement of the Heart Sutra accompanied by traditional Chinese instruments and synthesisers. At several points in the recording, the girls separated from the beginning unison singing with the boys to sing above them, mostly at the interval of a third.

Without revealing the discovery to the owner, Miss Wang, she was asked if, and how, the tape had influenced her singing in the temple. Not surprisingly, she said that she liked what she heard on the tape, and adopted it into her own chanting in the temple.<sup>16</sup>

This shows how easily the chant has changed because of the few numbers of regular attendees and clergy, and the absence of a basic knowledge of Buddhist singing. It will be interesting how long it will take others to join Miss Wang in her harmonisation.

### **3. The Transitory Nature of Taiwanese Immigrants in New Zealand**

Many of the Taiwanese immigrant to New Zealand in the late 1980's and 1990's came to escape cramped and expensive living conditions, rising crime, a polluted environment and a highly competitive education system. Although many were well qualified and well paid in Taiwan, getting a job in New Zealand was impossible for some due to language, racial and qualification problems.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Personal Conversation with 'Miss Wang', 14.10.01.

<sup>17</sup> Personal Interviews with informants 'E', 20.6.01, 'F', 20.9.01, and 'H', 19.6.01.

Many of the Taiwanese immigrants who have attended the Christchurch temple had to live off their life savings, in the hope that they would eventually get a job. Most, however, soon ran out of money, and returned to Taiwan, perhaps leaving children attending educational institutions. The Christchurch Press states that an Auckland based study of ethnic communities called 'The Asian Communities' Needs Report,' found that "Many new Asian migrants are returning home to seek work or trying to move to Australia and the United States to escape 'endemic under-employment'. . . . The study [also] found that all ethnic groups among more than 110,000 Asian people in Auckland were suffering high unemployment, well above the New Zealand average."<sup>18</sup>

Christchurch is facing a similar problem, and this is shown within the temple where several regular attendees left during this study to work in America, Taiwan and the United Kingdom. Job opportunities here have been few due to many New Zealand employers' high English language expectations and the fact that many overseas professional qualifications are unrecognised. Several families also left to go to Australia, in early 2001 to beat new immigration legislation that makes immigrants wait at least two years before they qualify for a benefit.<sup>19</sup>

Because many of the people are erratic in attendance and the turnover of new people who come to the temple is high due to the transitory nature of the Taiwanese immigrants in New Zealand, the overall knowledge base of elementary Buddhist practice remains consistently low.

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<sup>18</sup> "Asian Migrants Leaving for Work," *Christchurch Press* 5 July 2001: 3.

<sup>19</sup> Extracted from personal observations during fieldwork in the Christchurch temple, February 2001 to February 2002.

Several times over the history of the Christchurch temple, the various masters have had to explain these basics to the congregation, like the necessity of prostrating to the Buddha if you walk in front of him. In 1996, the nun who was there in charge of the temple explained to several of the congregation how to correctly sing the Buddhist sutras. She told them about wave singing and how to do it, as well as staggered breathing.<sup>20</sup> Because the masters are annually replaced and because of the erratic attendance and transitory nature of the temple's attendees, none who heard the 1996 master's directions on how to sing remain in the temple today.

Several people who were interviewed for this project are vaguely aware of wave singing, but treat it more as a myth, as they think it occurs in other, larger temples, but due to people's inexperience and the absence of several masters, not here in Christchurch.<sup>21</sup> They are quite right in assuming this, as the transitory lifestyles have meant that any individuals who knew how to sing properly have long since gone, replaced by individuals who possess little knowledge of practical Buddhism. The latter masters have not realised or attached any significance to the difference in the chants, and have not made any attempt to correct them by teaching the temple's attendees how to correctly chant.

#### **4. The Nature of the Christchurch Temple**

The particular characteristics that make the Christchurch temple unique and

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<sup>20</sup> Personal Interviews with informants 'E', 20.6.01, and 'H', 19.6.01.

<sup>21</sup> Personal Interviews with informants 'A', 19.6.01, and 'B', 2.6.01.

different from the Fo Kuang Shan temple in Taiwan are also some of the reasons behind the changes in the music.

### **Few Attendees and One Nun**

The small number of people that regularly attend the services account for many of the differences. In traditional temples, with many clergy in residence, some of the ceremonies can last for several days, yet in such a small temple, such as in Christchurch, this is not possible owing to only one nun being in attendance, and a congregation that has careers and families to look after. A small temple, therefore, has to limit its performing repertoire according to the number of attendees and clergy.

Several of the sutras that have been performed in the past in the Christchurch temple are contained in large and heavy books, that require tables to rest them on. As the numbers attending the Christchurch temple have dropped in the last year, especially with fewer men attending to help set up the tables in the temple, these sutras have been cut from regular performance.

Another example where this recent drop in numbers has affected the services is that there is a rotating roster amongst several of the young lay members to play the Dharma instruments at each service. During the February to June period of 2001, there were four people who were on this roster, but owing to two moving overseas for work and further education, only two are presently doing it. The Incense Anthem *Chieh Ting* has been performed at the majority of services in the last six months of

2001, but as one of the lay percussionists who irregularly attends the services did not know how the percussion line was supposed to go, this anthem was not done.<sup>22</sup>

As mentioned before, the Christchurch temple only having one nun in residence limits the service repertoire of the temple. It also means that the lay people must take over the roles of the ordained clergy and perform the Dharma instruments. The Abbot of Nan Tien temple in Sydney does not have a problem with this, yet it has affected the general accuracy of the performances in the temple.<sup>23</sup> The Fo Kuang clergy spend several years studying to become monks and nuns, and part of their training is learning how to sing and play the Dharma instruments.<sup>24</sup> A lay member without these years of training and attending services behind them has a very slim chance of getting the subtleties of the percussion parts correct, blending into the vocal lines and effectively leading the whole performance. The numerous occasions where there are inaccuracies in the percussion parts, as played in the Christchurch temple, is because members of the laity, with little training, have taken over roles traditionally played by trained clergy members.

### **The Marketing of the Christchurch Temple**

The Christchurch temple had a significant drop in attendance in the first six months of 2001, with the result that while it was once autonomous and self-sufficient from members' donations, it has now come under the direct control of Nan Tien Temple in Sydney, which supports it financially.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Extracted from personal observations during fieldwork in the Christchurch temple, February 2001 to February 2002.

<sup>23</sup> Personal Interview with Abbess Man Chien, 28.10.01.

<sup>24</sup> T.H. Tsai, "Change and Continuity," 12.

<sup>25</sup> Personal Interview with informant 'C', 3.8.01.



As the future of the temple rests on the number of attendees and the financial support they give, the resident nun and interested members are desperate to get more people to attend the Sunday service. As many of the attendees prefer singing sutras that are of direct benefit to themselves, such as the Medicine Buddha Sutra that gives good luck, health and wealth, and ceremonies that remember their ancestors, the nun regularly has these featured in the Sunday services, rather than, as is traditional, having them performed as additional services. In fact, the Medicine Buddha Sutra is held once a month, and the increase in attendance is noticeable at these services. As individuals pay \$50 per family to have these ceremonies that personally remember their ancestors, it provides the temple with a sizeable regular income.<sup>26</sup> A larger temple that is more financially independent would not have to do so, but as the Christchurch temple is financially insecure, it must align itself to 'market demand', and therefore limit its performing repertoire to ancestral and good luck ceremonies, and marginalises the perhaps spiritually more important repentance ceremonies, which are an integral part of the Buddhist liturgy.

Such a spirit to conform to the needs of the temple's members is very conducive to change, but in interviews with clergy from Nan Tien, there is a limit to what they are prepared to change. They all stated that the content of the service will not change now; it may in the future, but not now. They cited all the activities outside the service that the temple engaged in to attract people to the temple but could not cite anything that they could do to attract more people to the service proper.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Informal Conversation with informant 'B', 8.2.02.

<sup>27</sup> Personal Interviews with informant 'J', 31.5.01 and Abbess Man Chien, 28.10.01, and Vice-Abbess Man Shin, 4.11.01.

One attempt that the present nun has made in Christchurch is to delete the formal lecture at the end of a Sunday service, as was usual until August 2001, and to read instead a chapter from a book by Hsing Yun and have a group discussion about it. It remains to be seen if this will attract any more people, which is unlikely, as the service is still two and a half hours compared with the hour and a half it would take if the correct speed were followed.

Catering to the demands of a religiously inexperienced congregation, as part of the attendance oriented policy virtually in effect in the Christchurch temple, has the potential to cause great harm to Buddhism's integrity. Evidence of this has been the perceived 'ethnic' isolation by several New Zealanders in the congregation, who felt the Chinese cultural aspects of the temple, such as the ancestors' ceremonies, which could be interpreted as Confucian ancestor worship, really have nothing to do with Buddhism.<sup>28</sup> This need for people has led Hsing Yun's initial drive for universal Buddhist education to be forgotten in the urgency to make the temple survive financially.

### **Pedantry within the Christchurch Temple**

The fact that the Christchurch temple is the first significant experience with Buddhism that most of the attendees have means that to begin with, they have a very low knowledge of Buddhist practice, and therefore, are easily conditioned to the temple's peculiarities. One of the best examples of this happening is in the Invocation section of the Incense Anthem where everyone is singing along in unison, yet in other

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<sup>28</sup> Personal Interview with informant 'C', 3.8.01.

temples of the Fo Kuang organisation, wave singing occurs. As for many, this is their first practical experience of Buddhist singing, and so know no better.

Another example of the Christchurch temple's uniqueness, and its attempt to educate its attendees, is that during the service, a lay-member stands up the front of the congregation, and, with her arm, indicates when they are to bow. An usher also stands at the rear of the temple to make sure people are facing in the right direction, often physically pointing them in the right way.

In many temples, women traditionally sit on the left-hand side of the Buddha, and men on the right, but as there are very few men attending the temple, several of the women are told to join them.

As the Christchurch temple is a far off religious 'outpost', with the attendees often inexperienced and a high amount of autonomy given to the temple's master by Fo Kuang, a certain amount of artificiality has arisen in the temple in its practices within the service. This has also provided a suitable environment for change.

### **Cultural Conflicts**

As has been stated before, BLIA is the secular branch of the Fo Kuang organisation. Its principal aim is to get lay people to be more involved with Buddhism, through such things as charitable works and study groups. In Taiwan, BLIA and Fo Kuang exist separately with different governing bodies, one religious and the other secular, but complement each other. In New Zealand, however, as the

temple has been in the past financially dependent on support from the lay members of the BLIA, it is effectively the dominant partner.<sup>29</sup>

This resulted in several conflicts between the BLIA Christchurch committee and the last resident monk, as often they would have disagreements about what to do with the donations that the temple was receiving. The monk wanted to give the money away to benefit others, as “that is what the Buddha would have wanted,” but the committee wanted to keep it and invest it.<sup>30</sup> A further example was at Buddha’s Birthday celebrations, when people bathed the Buddha and placed incense before the Buddha, that they were required to give a donation, whereas the true spirit of Buddhism would have been to have the activity available to all for free.<sup>31</sup>

The average Sunday service attendance figures of twenty-five people out of the 150 BLIA members is also indicative of this conflict. Many people want the social and cultural benefits of belonging to the BLIA, as it provides a connection back to Taiwan, yet ignore the religious side.<sup>32</sup> Many people attend the Chinese New Year’s Eve celebrations and Tai Chi classes, but successive young people’s study groups and retreats have been failures.

The struggle to get people involved in the temple is another reason why the current nun has chosen to regularly perform the popular Medicine Buddha Sutra and Ancestors’ Memorial services. It could be suggested that, since the BLIA committee financially supported the Christchurch temple, they held the resident clergy member

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<sup>29</sup> Personal Interview with informant ‘C’, 3.8.01.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Personal Observations at Buddha’s Birthday Celebrations, Christchurch Square, 19.5.01.

<sup>32</sup> Personal Interview with informant ‘D’, 4.6.01.

in a captive position, dependent on their goodwill. The aggression and disrespect shown towards the last monk by the committee is perhaps why Nan Tien temple in Sydney took over the direct control of the Christchurch temple in 2001, forcing it to be more financially dependent.<sup>33</sup> The results of this remain to be seen, as the Medicine Buddha Sutra and Remembrance services continue to be held regularly, while other staples of the Buddhist liturgy languish.

### **Historical Parallels in Singapore**

A similar historical example of Buddhist temples as cultural centres took place in Singapore in the early nineteenth century, when Chinese immigrants came there as labourers and merchants. Many of the Chinese communities in Singapore, often separated by territorial and blood origin, not necessarily by dialect, would set up temples that served the dual role of place of worship and community centre. An example of this is the Hokkien temple built in 1842 and called Thian Hok Keng (Temple of Heavenly Blessing). Ostensibly a Buddhist temple, it functioned both as a place of worship and as a *hui-kuan*, or community hall, where various groups were based that convened educational and cultural activities, helped people find employment and organised political activity.

The interesting fact that the historian Trevor Ling points out is that this temple was “primarily a place of Chinese religion, rather than in any recognisably special sense a Buddhist temple. Everything about it emphasises its Chinese character.” Even the building materials and furnishings were specially imported from China, rather than using local material from Singapore. Ling goes on to point out that these early

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<sup>33</sup> Personal Interview with informant ‘C’, 3.8.01.

temples in Singapore reflected a wide range of religions that were popular in China at the time, including Buddhism, but not exclusively.<sup>34</sup> The primary function of these temples was in fact as centres of social activity.

### **Social Cravings of New Immigrants**

The most relevant point that can be extracted from these paragraphs, in relation to the present study, is that it is not unusual, even in nineteenth century Singapore, for immigrant Chinese groups to associate themselves with a temple for more social reasons than perhaps spiritual ones. In fact, it can also be suggested, as the results of the interviews have, that most of the twentieth century Chinese immigrants to New Zealand who were interviewed, did not regularly attend a temple, if ever, before they emigrated. As they are immigrants in a foreign country, however, the compulsion to find people of a similar background is very strong. As (nominal) Buddhism is a common denominator of their ethnicity, then gravitation to a Buddhist temple is natural. The following poignant quote from an interviewee points this out.

Come to new country, English not good. Feel panic, uncertainty in everything in this country. So the first week I get into Buddhist temple (in Christchurch). When started chanting, I started to cry because [I] just feel insecure. My feelings very strong at that time because in my country, I quite independent. My life is very confident. But that time when I get here, I just feel everything is insecure. [The temple has made me more secure, as] I feel as it is a home. Large group there, you feel support from each other and the minister. In [my] younger life, interested in Buddha's teachings. But it's not so many times to get into temple or learn something. Sometimes you feel that Buddha is just beside you. So [going to a temple] is not as important. But when I came to here, I feel that [it] is important to me [to go to the temple] as [I am] far away from the country [Taiwan]. I really started to study Buddhism when I get here, [because I've got] more time. Then I learned a lot of Buddhist philosophy, and put it into everyday life. Like you[r] involve[ment] in society, your thinking is [that] human life is short. We must do the best in this life, and help other people.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Trevor Ling, "Singapore: Buddhist Development in a Secular State," *Buddhist Trends in South-East Asia* (Institute of South-East Asian Studies, 1993) 154-183.

<sup>35</sup> Personal Interview with informant 'E', 20.6.01.

Comments like this are typical of many adult Taiwanese immigrants to New Zealand that were interviewed. These people were 'nominal' Buddhists in Taiwan, and felt little compulsion to attend temples. On arrival in New Zealand, however, where they had no family or friends, knew little English and had no job, many gravitated to the Christchurch temple, as it was a base for Chinese culture and company. As many other immigrants were also connected to it, the temple soon became many immigrants' 'home away from home'.

Hsing Yun's biographer points out the observation that Taiwanese immigrants to America had similar needs, and that many found security, in Fo Kuang's Hsi Lai temple in Los Angeles. She states that

the [Chinese] Buddhist populace in America [have found] an anchorage for its spirit and stability for its body and mind. In the counseling [sic] provided by the monastics [sic], the immigrants, strangers to this land, find ready solutions to their daily problems as well as help for their emotional and psychological frustrations. Sociologically speaking, therefore, this is where social interaction takes place and where social identification can be found.<sup>36</sup>

This statement shows that Buddhism was not necessarily the main reason people went to the temple, but for interaction with other Taiwanese, and the social benefits that attending the temple offered.

Many of the regular attendees to the Sunday service in the temple appear to be devout Buddhists, who have 'taken refuge'<sup>37</sup>. The religious integrity, however, can be

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<sup>36</sup> Fu Chi-Ying, 350.

<sup>37</sup> Taking refuge is similar to a confirmation service in a Christian church, where a follower takes formal vows, in front of a minister or priest, to follow Christ and the church. In Buddhism's case, these are vows taken in front of a member of the clergy to embrace and follow the Three Jewels of Buddhism, the Buddha, the sangha, or community of monks and nuns, and the Dharma, or sacred writings. Normally, these people have also been able to lead their lives according to the Five Precepts. No formal 'examination' is held to determine this, but is left up to the individual to decide when it has occurred. In the Christchurch temple, these self-proclaimed 'Five Precept followers' may wear brown, light blue or fawn coloured cassocks to symbolise this. Other external signs of having 'taken refuge',

questioned of the majority who belong to the BLIA, yet attend the temple for only social reasons, like the ancestors' remembrance ceremonies and festivals.

An example of the Chinese culture orientation in the temple is shown within the Buddhist festivals, where although Buddhism holds universal appeal, Chinese culture dominates all other cultures in the activities performed to celebrate the festivals. In the 2001 Buddha's Birthday celebrations that were held in Christchurch's Cathedral Square, of the seventeen activities that occurred, only three were not Chinese. These were a performance by 'The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society of the Canterbury Region' and 'traditional' Japanese and Thai dancers. The rest consisted of Chinese martial arts displays, 'traditional' dances originated from the Dun Huang caves in China, traditional Chinese instrument performances on the *yang chin* and *erh hu*, and Lion Dancing. These are all staples of Chinese culture and show how the temple and its activities act as a 'Chinese social club' for many Taiwanese immigrants.

As the organisation that backs the temple is in Taiwan, all the clergy have been Chinese (including Taiwanese and Malay Chinese), and the majority of the attendees are Taiwanese, it is not surprising that the emphasis within the temple is on Chinese culture rather than global culture, which would be the true spirit of Buddhism. The fact that the Christchurch temple so frequently holds ceremonies to remember ancestors, which is an aspect of Chinese culture rather than a Buddhist

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according to Charles Brewer Jones, in his book, *Buddhism in Taiwan: Religion and the State, 1660-1990*, are the wearing, often around the wrist, of "small rosaries (*nianzhu*) as a visible symbol that they have formally taken refuge under a master." They often also "use the name of Amitabha Buddha as a substitute for 'hello,' 'goodbye,' 'excuse me,' and most other social expressions." 115. Similar observations have been made by this author in the Christchurch temple.



belief, has, as mentioned before, isolated many genuine, but non-Chinese Buddhists who have attended the temple.<sup>38</sup> On the other hand, it has guaranteed a high amount of interest in Buddhism and the Christchurch temple by the immigrant Chinese population of Christchurch.

One interviewee noted that one of the reasons why the attendance in the temple has decreased, is that another Taiwanese association has been set up in Christchurch, called the Hwa Hsin Society. It is secular in orientation, and helps immigrants find accommodation, employment and suitable schools for their children, as well as running many Chinese cultural programmes, often in competition with the Christchurch temple.<sup>39</sup> It is quite likely that some immigrants feel more comfortable with the secular environment of the Hwa Hsin Society, which still provides contact with Chinese culture, but without the religion.

## **5. The Master of the Christchurch Temple**

As the master of the temple leads the chanting of the sutras, it is reasonable to suggest that any change in the chant compared with the tradition in Taiwan has been from her instigation, or that she has passively allowed it, or is unaware of it.

As the Christchurch temple is the first temple that this present master has had charge of, after seven years in Nan Tien temple in Sydney, it is also reasonable to expect a certain amount of insecurity on her part when faced with the responsibility of

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<sup>38</sup> Personal Interview with informant 'C', 3.8.01.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

leading the temple. This is especially due to the special nature of the Christchurch temple and its attendees, as mentioned previously in this chapter. It would be difficult to imagine a greater difference than from spending seven years singing the Buddhist sutras every day as one member of a group of 500 people, to being the only nun leading a group of twenty-five struggling Buddhist initiates.

One person that I spoke to thought that her individual 'style' is perhaps a large factor in precipitating change in the Christchurch temple. He said that he found this present master very difficult to follow compared with the last one.

She goes through stages where she'll use the microphone, and then she won't. And then suddenly she'll come in with the microphone, and it's very loud. Whereas the other master, he had a very deep voice and very consistent and really nice pitch. A really easygoing voice to listen to, and quite consistent. So it was much easier to chant along with him. When this master arrived, it probably took me a good two to three months to get used to her style because it was different. She would do the same chants, but at a different speed. My understanding of one of the chants would be that I know what part is coming up [], and you would hold that note. Well she wouldn't. She'd just stop it short and then go onto the next one. I found her style very disjointed at times until I got used to it, because it was so different.<sup>40</sup>

It was suggested to him that the main perceived difference was that she was a woman, but he asserted that it was something more than that.

I think it was more her style. With the other master, I travelled with him to Taiwan last year [2000], and he invited me to go with him, and we spent a month travelling, staying in the [Fo Kuang] monasteries. The majority of the monastics [sic] in the temples there are nuns. So I was quite familiar with the nuns' singing. They definitely do have a different pitch [timbre?] with being female, but I think it was more to do with her style. In some ways not as polished, or not as refined.<sup>41</sup>

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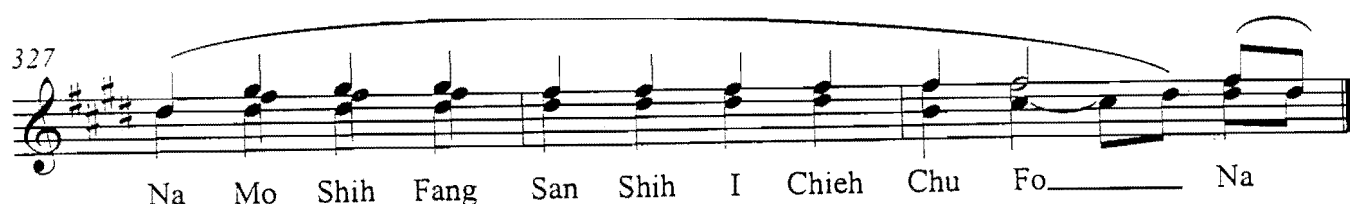
<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

There are two incidents that have occurred in this temple during the period of research which confirm the erratic nature of the present master, one is musical and the other is ritualistic.

In the Invocation section of the Incense Anthem, the Christchurch congregation established set repetitive patterns that were repeated almost identically each time. In one repeat, however, the master suddenly joined Miss Wang in providing harmony of the repetitive patterns, yet at no other point did so.

Example 30. 327-329



The second example is the event of 'walking meditation' that occurs in the first half of the service on Sundays if the Amitaba Buddha Sutra is recited. In it, the congregation is led by the master around the interior of the temple many times, winding between the congregation's cushions, chanting the name of the Amitaba Buddha. It is the master's responsibility to lead the congregation from sitting meditation to walking meditation and back to sitting meditation so that they end up on the same cushion. As one interviewee noted, "With her, it's very erratic, and you never know when it's going to end and where you're going to end up."<sup>42</sup> The previous master only did a few revolutions and always ended back where they began, and they were consequently able to maintain their level of meditation throughout.

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

One of the major discoveries that this individual made during his pilgrimage in Taiwan was that the chant is standardised across the Fo Kuang tradition.

I could go to different [Fo Kuang] temples from north Taiwan right down to the bottom and back, and I went to twelve or fourteen temples and ceremonies, and they were very standardised, because the moment they would start chanting, I would know straight away which one it was. I realised that the first time I went to the ceremony over there, I thought, 'Oh, I should have brought my book with me and then I can do it, because I always do it from the book here. But then I realised when I was over there that I've actually got a lot of it committed to memory. And as soon as I can hear it, I can chant along. So they were standardised enough for me, being the only Westerner in most of these ceremonies, that I could pick up [what] one it was most of the time and chant along with it and not be lost. But with this [new] master coming here, I've got lost at times in my chanting, trying to do it. So that's why I think it's more an individual style of hers.<sup>43</sup>

The present research agrees with this person's findings, in that even when nuns come over to the Christchurch temple from Nan Tien, to lead the service, the chanting style and speed is virtually exactly the same as the recording from Fo Kuang Shan temple in Taiwan. On one occasion when the Vice-Abbess from Nan Tien took the service, the Invocation section provided a lot of conflict between the unison and repetitive singing of the Christchurch congregation and the Vice-Abbess who followed the wave singing principles and sang anything but the congregation's notes. As well as this, she took the whole ceremony at the Taiwan speed, shaving at least fifteen minutes from the normal time and leaving many of the Christchurch congregation lost, confused and breathless.<sup>44</sup> The Abbess from Nan Tien had visited the Christchurch temple the week before, and commented during an interview that the speed was abysmally slow here, and so may have told the Vice-Abbess to show them how it is really done.<sup>45</sup> Unfortunately, the chanting reverts back to the Christchurch

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Personal Conversations with informants 'B', and 'F', 4.11.01.

<sup>45</sup> Personal Interview with Abbess Man Chien, 28.10.01.

'style' when the present nun takes over again. It is unfortunate because so many of the young Taiwanese immigrants find the chant in the Christchurch temple "boring and slow", yet if it were sung at the correct speed it is extraordinarily energetic and profound at the same time.<sup>46</sup>

Although one could be led to believe that the cause for change rests entirely on the present master's erratic nature and insecurity in leading the congregation, it could be interpreted in another, more plausible way. This is that she has seen that the Christchurch congregation struggles with the chanting and so has slowed it down, and shorn it of its decoration, to make it more approachable and achievable for the congregation. The congregation, therefore, must shoulder the majority of the responsibility for precipitating change, although without a doubt unintentionally through their ignorance of practical Buddhism.

The present master's perceived 'erraticness' may be her way of finding out what works, and what does not for the congregation. In fact, she is really quite consistent overall, when recordings from April 2001 to February 2002 are compared. There are only minor differences, and these are principally in the percussion parts played by the lay people. It would have been much better to have started this research just prior to her arrival, to do a direct comparison of any change between the two masters, and not have to rely on interviews. Even better still, will be to see how, and if, the singing changes when this present master leaves, and is replaced by another one.

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<sup>46</sup> Personal Interview and Conversation with informants 'B', 18.2.01 and 'D', 4.6.01.

## 6. Western Influences within the Temple

The Western influence that provides the biggest impact on the traditional chant is the microphone and speaker. Even though the temple is the size of a small sub-urban chapel, the master still leads the service with a microphone. Until around June 2001, the speaker that this was fed through was kept in a side room with its door open, but the present master decided to place it directly in front of the congregation, leading to some excruciating levels of volume and distortions of sound. This has meant that by following the master's pitches, the congregation have no doubt as to what they should be singing, even in the Invocation Section, where they are not meant to be singing in unison but still repeatedly follow her. As the present master has never explained wave singing to them, and it is so easy to follow her while singing in the service due to her loudness, the unison style is imprinted on them and any newcomers.

As the attendance of New Zealanders is infrequent and in marginal numbers, their effect on the chanting is small. The extent is perhaps the mispronunciation of the words, but they are more likely to slow things down further, especially as the present master alluded to the fact that she has slowed down the chant for their sakes.<sup>47</sup> A further point supporting the idea that the master, due to her compassion, has let the congregation to a certain extent dictate what the chant will be like, and how simple it will be kept.

The reason why Western/New Zealand influences within the Christchurch temple are so limited is because the Taiwanese immigrants were thoroughly Westernised and very erudite before they came to New Zealand. As has been the case

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<sup>47</sup> Personal Interview with informant 'J', 31.6.01.

with the majority of Asian immigrants to New Zealand, they have established their own enclaves within their communities, only infrequently mixing with non-Asians.<sup>48</sup> Christchurch is perhaps an extreme example of this, where the Asian population has gravitated to certain middle-class suburbs, set up their own churches (or in this case, temples), culture and business clubs, sent their children to certain schools, and have not integrated into New Zealand society. The fundamental reason why the Christchurch temple has had limited Western influence is that it is an important bastion of Chinese culture, with its festivals and ancestors' remembrance services, as most of the Taiwanese immigrants have not attempted to assimilate into New Zealand culture.

## **7. The Possibility of Parallel Change in Taiwan**

In a comparative study of change, there is always a chance that two traditions could be changing at the same time in similar ways. This is especially the case where to survive, the traditions need to attract younger people and so compromise on certain issues.

The Fo Kuang organisation has embraced modern trends and fashions, and used them for their own ends, such as setting up choirs in the early days and more recently Buddhist karaoke. What makes the Fo Kuang organisation unique amongst other religious organisations, like mainstream Protestantism, is that they quite distinctly separate the music of the Buddhist ritual from Buddhist popular music which can be listened to while doing the housework or at a night club. This means that

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<sup>48</sup> Le Heux, Benjamin. "Identity Through Music: The Music of the Chinese Christian Church in Avonhead, Christchurch, and the Role that Music Plays in Providing Identity for its Musicians," research paper, U of Canterbury, 2000.

the traditional ritual music can live on relatively unchanged. A point raised earlier, is that the chant used in the Buddhist ceremonies in such temples as Nan Tien in Sydney, and no doubt others, excluding Christchurch, is itself very energetic and lively if performed at the correct speed. This has led several people to comment that it is “Buddhist rock Music”, and as it is so different to what their expectations were, they were pleasantly surprised.<sup>49</sup> On the other hand, the Christchurch temple caters specifically for a middle-aged congregation and scares away many younger people because of its lugubrious melodies. As the larger Fo Kuang temples cater for their younger people, with activities outside the temple and with its fast and energetic ritual music, they have no compulsion to change.

A further plausible reason that the larger temples can easily resist change is that their population of clergy is so much higher than in New Zealand that they will by their majority drown out any dissenting voices. A 2000 commercial recording of some of the clergy from Fo Kuang Shan temple in Taiwan singing the Incense Anthem *Chieh Ting* accompanied by synthesisers is further evidence that little, if any change has occurred, as the melodies and decorations were almost exactly the same with the earlier comparative example from Fo Kuang Shan. Even though the liturgical tradition is not musically notated down, it still lives on very strongly because the Fo Kuang organisation has over a million members world-wide, and also that they have so energetically embraced the recording industry, both for financial and religious reasons.

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<sup>49</sup> Personal Interview with Abbess Man Chien, 28.10.01.



## 8. The Possibility of this Change Occurring Naturally

Many musical traditions change gradually over time, by absorbing outside influences and also from changes instigated within themselves. The previous section negated the possibility that parallel change could be happening in Taiwan at the present time that matched what was happening in the Christchurch temple, so therefore, the change that has occurred in Christchurch has been independent.

It is unlikely that the changes to the temple's music have been instigated by exposure to New Zealand's music culture, as most within the temple have little to do with New Zealanders but stay within their immigrant enclaves and groups. None of the examples of change point strongly to an outside influence being instrumental to change within the temple. Such change, if it happened, would be gradual, and such gradual change has not been noted over the course of this study. Six recordings of the Incense Anthem, *Chieh Ting*, taken between April 2001 and February 2002 have not shown any change whatsoever. There are of course, minor aberrations in the percussion parts, and starting pitches may not always be the same, factors expected in an essentially vocal tradition practised by noviciates.

The change that has taken place as influenced from outside the temple, has been the coming of the present master, and her style of singing. The majority of the change, however, has been precipitated from within the temple, by the nature of the temple itself, and its attendees. As the tradition is young and its attendees constantly changing, to be replaced by more inexperienced Buddhists, the temple has little chance to progress or change at all if these exact conditions are maintained.

There is no one single factor behind why the liturgical chant in the Christchurch temple has changed. In fact, it is a composite blend of many issues that surround the Christchurch temple and its attendees that has been the cause. It would be difficult to say whether, one of these factors mentioned in the chapter was removed or remedied, if the tradition would be quite the same.

What stands out, however, is that the Christchurch temple is isolated, and that its isolation is a large factor behind the change as its attendees are not exposed to the musical tradition as performed in Taiwan.

Another generalisation that can be made is that the majority of this change has been precipitated from within, by the nature of the temple and its attendees, whereas external stimuli, like Western influences, have been minimal.

## Conclusion

The differences between the two recordings of the incense anthem, *Chieh Ting*, from the Christchurch and Fo Kuang Shan temples, on which this research was based, show how the Christchurch example has separated from the established tradition in Taiwan, and independently developed its own variation. This variation is mostly a simpler version, slow and unadorned, yet with a few additions such as the repetitive passages and its harmony in the Invocation section of the Incense Anthem.

These changes have come about due to a myriad of reasons and their collective interactions. What bears remembering, however, is that the main reasons were to do with the attendees' limited practical Buddhist knowledge and the very isolated nature of the Christchurch temple, where attendance was erratic and transient in character. Because of the attendees' low level of assimilation in New Zealand society, Western influences in the temple's chant have been minimal.

The liturgical chant in the Christchurch temple does show strong links to the musical tradition in Taiwan, and the attendees can follow a visiting clergy member directing in the Taiwanese style, but they soon revert to the secure and simple Christchurch style once the visitor has gone. As the majority of the attendees have little experience in practical Buddhism, they find security in its staid manner.

It is very tempting to say that the main instigator of change is the resident clergy member yet, because these people stay for only a year, in reality they have very little actual influence on the liturgical style within the temple. They could, of course,

correct the attendees, showing them how the chanting is properly done, as one nun attempted in 1996. The effect of this, however, was short lived, as no one remains in the temple today who experienced that teaching. All the past members have been replaced by other Buddhist initiates who have limited practical Buddhist knowledge. The main instigator of change, therefore, is the nature of the temple and its attendees through their transient lifestyles and low level of Buddhist awareness.

Further change, within the liturgy of the Christchurch temple, is unlikely because of these same factors that precipitated change. It would take a change itself in one of those factors (temple attendance and Buddhist knowledge) that initially prescribed change, for the Christchurch temple to change further. For example, a concentrated effort by the clergy to educate the attendees in how to correctly chant would change much, and bring the Christchurch temple closer to its parent tradition.

Although one of the central beliefs of Buddhism is the acceptance of the inevitability of change, the people in position to make change in the Fo Kuang organisation refuse to do so, but always say “maybe later”. Paradoxically, change has taken place in one of the very fundamental practices within Buddhism, and gone largely unnoticed.

The disappointing outcome of the change in the Christchurch temple’s chant is that the young Taiwanese immigrants have been put off by the temple’s lugubrious and “boring” music. The low attendance of young people is a serious concern for the temple, and attempts to involve them in the music-making of the temple have been made, but were mostly unsuccessful due to the recent departure of many. If the

Christchurch temple was to speed up the music so that it is the same as in Taiwan, energetic and exciting, it is very likely that not as many young people would be turned away because of the 'boring' music. Adopting such a speed will also considerably cut the length of the service, which is also unattractive for many young people. Two and a half-hours on cushions is a long endurance for 'Westernised' youth.

The original emphasis of the Fo Kuang organisation, as founded by Hsing Yun, was to educate a religiously immature and ignorant Taiwanese population on the merits and practices of Humanistic Buddhism. This has been forgotten in a drive to popularise Buddhism and attract as many participants as possible. In Taiwan, where there is a strong and vibrant sangha, such an environment leaves little opportunity for change. In New Zealand, however, where there is only one resident clergy member in the Christchurch temple, a strong attendance oriented policy and a congregation that is largely ignorant of Buddhist philosophy and practice, the potential for change is great, and has been realised.

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# 1. Ethics Committee Letter of Approval

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10 May 2001

Benjamin Le Heux  
C/o Mrs Elaine Dobson  
Department of Music  
UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

Dear Benjamin

The Human Ethics Committee advises that your research proposal **"An Investigative and Documentary Study of Music and Change within a Buddhist Community in Christchurch, New Zealand"** has been considered and approved.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Isobel S Phillips', is positioned above the printed name and title.

Isobel S Phillips  
*Secretary*

## **2. Transcriptions of the Taiwan and Christchurch Versions of the Anthem and Invocation Sections from the Incense Anthem *Chieh Ting***

The transcription process consisted firstly of listening to several ‘overviews’ of the piece, getting a sense for the structure, and following the percussion notations and words in the sutra book, noting where repeats of material occurred, and where the performance differed from the notation.

The intention was to capture the essence of the performance, and the overall sounds that the majority of the performers made. In the Christchurch example, with many inexperienced singers, there are frequent ‘stray’ notes from the uniform mass. These have not been notated, as they would have detracted from the overall approach needed to create a firm basis on which to compare the two examples.

The use of bar lines and key signatures is a necessary regimentation of the transcriptions, even though the overall aural effect of the chant is virtually seamless, with little noticeable structure. This enforced rigidity is unavoidable as direct comparisons are drawn between the music of the two temples in the text; and references to certain bar lines, bar numbers and key signatures, provide clear reference points for the extracted examples, and identifies from whence they were taken.

A piano was used throughout the transcription process to approximate the pitches sung, and when these were clearly identified, were then written down on manuscript paper and later transferred to the music notational program ‘Sibelius’. No dynamic markings are indicated, as rhythm and texture are the primary components of

these pieces and also are the main points of discussion in this thesis. Women sing at pitch and men sing an octave below.

It is important to remember that once committed to paper, the music has lost a lot of its mysticism and context. Even a recording is a pale representation of the actual performance. Participants are there ostensibly for the religious experience, not especially for chanting, as chanting is only a small, but important feature of the service. Perfect performances, therefore, where everyone sings exactly in unison, following the ornamentation of the Heshang and where the dharma instruments are hit simultaneously when the syllables change, are rare. Many of those interviewed for this thesis maintained that perfection of the chant was not the aim, but merely participation at whatever ability the suppliant possessed.

#### **Key**

- ^ Arrowhead pointing up indicates a quarter-tone up.
- ∨ Arrowhead pointing down indicates a quarter-tone down.
- ( ) Note(s) within two Parentheses indicates an approximation of pitch and rhythm.
- / Line between two notes indicates a glissandi.

# Incense Anthem *Chieh Ting*

From the Cassette Tape *Lunch Offering*,

1

As Performed in Fo Kuang Shan Temple, Taiwan.

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and *Heshang*

$\text{♩} = 50$

Opening by *Heshang*.

*Chieh*

6

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

*accl.* *a tempo*

*Ting* *Chen*

Congregation joins the *Heshang*.

10

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

*Hsiang*

14

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

(Hsiang) Fen Ch'i

18

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Ch'ung T'ien Shang

21

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

(Shang)

24

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Ti Tzu Ch'ien

27

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Ch'eng

30

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

(Ch'eng) Je



33

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Tsai Chin Lu

36

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Shang (Shang)

40

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Ch'ing K'e Fen

43

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Yun

46

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

*accl.*

*a tempo*

(Yun) Chi

49

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Pien Man Shih

52

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Fang

(Fang)

56

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Hsi

Jih

Yeh

59

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Shu

62 Unclear transition bar

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Mien Nan Hsiao

65 *accl.*

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

*accl.*

Tsai Chang Na Mo

68 *a tempo*

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

*a tempo*

Hsiang Yun Kai

71

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

P'u

74

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Sa Mo

77

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Ho

80 *accl.*

Tiao Qing and Gu

Chazi

Muyu and Da Qing

*accl.*

Sa Na Mo Hsiang

83 *a tempo*

Tiao Qing and Gu

Chazi

Muyu and Da Qing

*a tempo*

Yun Kai

86

Tiao Qing and Gu

Chazi

Muyu and Da Qing

P'u Sa

89

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Mo

92

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

*accl.*

*accl.*

Ho Sa

95

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

*a tempo*

*a tempo*

Na Mo Hsiang Yun

98

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Kai P'u

101

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Sa

104

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Mo Ho



107 **Invocation Section**

*Tiao Qing and Gu* *accl.* *dim.*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Sa.

111 *a tempo* ♩ = 50

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

*Heshang begins.* ♩ = 50

Na Mo

115 ♩ = 60 *accl.* ♩ = 70 *accl.*

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

♩ = 60 *accl.* ♩ = 70

*Congregation joins.* *accl.*

LingShanHueishang Fo P'u Sa Na Mo LingShan HueiShangFo P'u

119

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

*Very free time.*

Sa Na Mo Ling Shan Huei Shang Fo P'u Sa

122

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

$\bullet = 55$

$\bullet = 55$

*Heshang solo.*

*Congregation joins*

Na Ma Mo Ch'ang

126

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

$\bullet = 70$

*accl.*

*accl.*

*accl.*

$\bullet = 70$

*accl.*

Chu Shih Fang Fo Na Mo Ch'ang Chu Shih Fang Fa

129  $\text{♩} = 85$  *accl.*  $\text{♩} = 100$

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

$\text{♩} = 85$  *accl.*  $\text{♩} = 100$

Na Mo Ch'iang Chu Shih Fang Seng Na Mo Pen

132

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Shih Shih Chia Hou Ni Fo Na Mo Hsiao Tsai Yen Shou Yao Shih Fo

136

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Na Mo Chi Lo Shih Chieh A

138

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Chazi*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

etc.

These are the clearest pitches present.

Mi To Fo Na Mo Tang Lai Hsia etc.

At this point, the texture becomes too thick to manually transcribe.

# Incense Anthem *Chieh Ting*

From a Field Recording on 10 June 2001

Christchurch Fo Kuang Temple, New Zealand

*Tiao Qing*  
and *Gu*

*Muyu* and  
*Da Qing*

Congregation  
and *Heshang*

$\text{♩} = 35$

*accl.* *dim.*

*Tiao Qing*  
and *Gu*

*Muyu* and  
*Da Qing*

Congregation  
and *Heshang*

5

$\text{♩} = 65$

$\text{♩} = 65$

*Tiao Qing*  
and *Gu*

*Muyu* and  
*Da Qing*

Congregation  
and *Heshang*

9

*accl.* *a tempo*

*accl.* *a tempo*

*Tiao Qing*  
and *Gu*

*Muyu* and  
*Da Qing*

Congregation  
and *Heshang*

13

*accl.* *a tempo*

*dim.*

2

17

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and *Heshang*

*accl.*

*dim.*

$\text{♩} = 80$

21

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and *Heshang*

*accl.*

25

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and *Heshang*

$\text{♩} = 60$   $\text{♩} = 50$

*dim.*

3

7

29

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and *Heshang*

*Heshang begins.*

Congregation joins.

Chieh \_\_\_\_\_ Ting \_\_\_\_\_

33

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Chen Hsiang

50

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

*a tempo*

54

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

*rit* *a tempo*

Ti Tzu

58

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Ch'ien

62

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

(Master)

Ch'eng



66  $\text{♩} = 50$  *a tempo*

Tiao Qing and Gu

Muyu and Da Qing

Congregation and Heshang

(Master)

Je

70

Tiao Qing and Gu

Muyu and Da Qing

Congregation and Heshang

*rit.* *a tempo*

Tsai Chin

74

Tiao Qing and Gu

Muyu and Da Qing

Congregation and Heshang

*rit.* *a tempo* *accl.* *a tempo*

Lu Shang

78

Tiao Qing and Gu

Muyu and Da Qing

Congregation and Heshang

82  $\text{♩} = 70$

Tiao Qing and Gu

Muyu and Da Qing

Congregation and Heshang

*rit.*  $\text{♩} = 70$

Ch'ing K'e Fen

86

Tiao Qing and Gu

Muyu and Da Qing

Congregation and Heshang

90  $\text{♩} = 80$

Tiao Qing and Gu

Muyu and Da Qing

Congregation and Heshang

$\text{♩} = 80$  *rit.*

Yun

94  $\text{♩} = 60$   $\text{♩} = 70$

Tiao Qing and Gu

Muyu and Da Qing

Congregation and Heshang

$\text{♩} = 60$  *accl.*  $\text{♩} = 70$

Chi

98

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Pien Man

102

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Shih Fang

*accl. a tempo*

106

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

111

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Hsi Jih Yeh

*accl. a tempo*

115

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Shu

119

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Mien

123

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Nan Hsiao

127

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

accl. a tempo

Tsai Chang

131

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Na Mo Hsiang

135

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Congregation bows. Yun Kai

139

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

P'u

143

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Sa

147

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Congregation rises.

Mo

151

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Ho

155

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

$\text{♩} = 80$

Sa

159

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Na Mo Hsiang

163

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Yun Kai

167

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

*accl. a tempo accl.*

$\text{♩} = 80$

P'u

Congregation bows.

171

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Sa

175

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Congregation rises.

Mo

179

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

(Master)

Ha

183

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Sa

187

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Na Mo Hsiang

Congregation bows.

191

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Yun Kai



195

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

*accl. a tempo*

*accl. a tempo*

P'u

199

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Sa

203

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Mo

Congregation rises.

207

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Ho

Sa

211

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

215

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

*accl.*

$\text{♩} = 65$

7

3

$\text{♩} = 65$

Master begins.

Na

219

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Congregation joins.

Mo Ling Shan Hui Shang Fo P'u Sa

222

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Na Mo Ling Shan Hui Shang Fo P'u Sa Na Mo

225

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

LingShanHueiShang Fo P'u Sa Na

Master

229

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Mo Ch'ang Chu Shih Fang Fo Na Mo Ch'ang

Congregation joins.

$\text{half note} = 75$

232

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Chu ShihFang Fa Na MoCh'ang Chu ShihEang Seng Na Mo Pen

236

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Shih ShihChia Hou Ni Fo Na Mo HsiaoTsaiYen Shou YaoShih Fo

240

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Na Mo Chi Lo Shih Chieh A Me To Fo Na Mo Tang Lai

244

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Hsia Sheng Ni Le Tsun Fo Na Mo Shih Fang San Shih I Chi'eh Chu

248

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Fo Na Mo Ta Chih Wen Shu Shih Li P'u Sa

251

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Na Mo Ta Heng P'u Hsien P'u Sa Na Mo Ta Pei Kuan Shih Yin

255

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

P'u Sa Na Mo Ta Shih Chih P'u Sa Na

258

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

MoCh'ingChingTa Hai ChungP'u Sa Na Mo\_Hu \* \* \* \*

262

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

\* P'u Sa Na Mo Hu Fa Chu T'ien P'u Sa Na MoChieh

266

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Lan Sheng Chung P'u Sa Na Mo Li Tai Tsu shih

269

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

P'u Sa Na Mo Ch'ang Chu Shih Fang Fo Na

272

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Mo Ch'ang Chu Shih Fang Fa Na Mo Ch'ang Chu Shih

275

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Fang Seng Na Mo Pen Shih Shih Chia Hou Ni Fo Na Mo Hsiao

279

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Tsai Yen Shou Yao Shih Fo Na Mo Chi Lo Shih

282

*Tiao Qing*  
and *Gu**Muyu* and  
*Da Qing*Congregation  
and *Heshang*

Chieh A Mi To Fo Na Mo Tang Lai Hsia Sheng Ni Le Tsun Fo

286

*Tiao Qing*  
and *Gu**Muyu* and  
*Da Qing*Congregation  
and *Heshang*

Na Mo Shih Fang San Shih I Chi'eh Chu Fo

289

*Tiao Qing*  
and *Gu**Muyu* and  
*Da Qing*Congregation  
and *Heshang*

Na Mo Ta Chih Wen Shu Shih Li P'u Sa Na Mo Ta Heng P'u

293

*Tiao Qing*  
and *Gu**Muyu* and  
*Da Qing*Congregation  
and *Heshang*

Hsien P'u Sa Na Mo Ta Pei Kuan Shih Yin P'u Sa Na Mo

297

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Ta Shih Chih P'u Sa Na Mo Ch'ing Ching Ta Hai

300

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

ChungP'u Sa Na Mo Hu \* \* \* \* P'u Sa Na

304

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Mo Hu Fa Chu T'ienP'u Sa Na MoChiehLan Sheng ChungP'u Sa

308

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Na Mo Li Tai Tsu ShihP'u Sa Na Mo Ch'angChuShih Fang

$\text{♩} = 115$



312

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Fo Na Mo Ch'ang Chu Shih Fang Fa Na Mo

315

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Ch'angChu ShihFang Seng Na Mo PenShihShihChia HouNi Fo

319

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

(Master)

Na MoHsiaoTsai YenShouYaoShih Fo Na Mo Chi Lo ShihChieh

323

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

$\text{♩} = 120$

*acc. = 120*

(Master)

A Mi To Fo Na MoTang LaiHsia ShengNi Le Tsun Fo

327

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Na Mo Shih Fang san Shih I Chi'eh Chu Fo Na Mo Ta Chih Wen

331

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

$\text{♩} = 125$   
*accl.*

Shu Shih Li P'u Sa Na Mo Ta Heng P'u Hsien P'u Sa Na

335

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

$\text{♩} = 135$

Mo Ta Pei Kuan Shih Yin P'u Sa Na Mo Ta Shih Chih P'u sa

339

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

*accl.*

Na Mo Ch'ing Ching Ta Hai Chung P'u Sa Na Mo Hu \* \*

343

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

\* \* \* P'u Sa Na Mo Hu Fa Chu T'ien P'u Sa Na

347

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Mo Chieh Lan Sheng Chung P'u Sa

349

*Tiao Qing and Gu*

*Muyu and Da Qing*

Congregation and Heshang

Na Mo Li Tai Tsu Shih P'u Sa.

### 3. Facsimile of Incense Anthem *Chieh Ting* With Percussion Notation and English Translations

Extracted from "The Buddhist Liturgy," International Buddhist Association of Australia Incorporated, n.pub., n.d., 221-222 and 188-190.

This shows the percussion notation and an English translation.

#### Anthem

#### (1) 戒定真香讚 Incense Anthem "CHIEH TING"

CHIEH TING CHEN HSIANG FEN CH'I CH'UNG  
戒 定 真 香。 焚 起 衝  
Incense for discipline and serenity burns to reach heavens above.

T' IEN SHANG TI TZU CH' IEN CH' ENG  
天 上。 弟 子 虔 誠。  
We, the disciples devout,

JE TSAI CHIN LU SHANG CH'ING K'E FEN  
熱 在 金 爐 上。 頃 刻 紛  
Offer it on an exquisite censer. Instantaneously

YUN CHI PIEN MAN SHIH FANG  
纒。 即 徧 滿 十 方。  
and suffusively It has permeated all places.

HSI JIH YEH SHU MIEN NAN HSIAO TSAI CHANG  
昔 日 耶 輸。 免 難 消 災 障。  
In the past Yasodhara avoided calamities and averted disasters.

NA MO HSIANG YUN KAI P'U SA MO HO SA  
南 無 香 雲 蓋 菩 薩 摩 訶 薩。  
Blessed be Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas under incense-cloud canopies.

NA MO HSIANG YUN KAI P'U SA MO HO SA  
南 無 香 雲 蓋 菩 薩 摩 訶 薩。  
Blessed be Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas under incense-cloud canopies

NA MO HSIANG YUN KAI P'U SA MO HO SA  
南 無 香 雲 蓋 菩 薩 摩 訶 薩。  
Blessed be Bodhisattvas Mahasattvas under incense-cloud canopies.

## Invocation Section

### 2. 稱佛菩薩名號 Invocation

NA MO LING SHAN HUEI SHANG FO P'U SA (3 times)  
南 無 靈 山 會 上 佛 菩 薩 (三 遍)

Blessed be Buddhas and Bodhisattvas assembled on sacred mountains.

(以下接連十九聖號周而復始稱念三遍)

(The following 19 names to be recited one after another three times.)

NA MO CH'ANG CHU SHIH FANG FO  
南 無 常 住 十 方 佛。  
Blessed be ever dwelling Buddhas in all places.

NA MO CH'ANG CHU SHIH FANG FA  
南 無 常 住 十 方 法。  
Blessed be ever-dwelling Dharma in all places.

NA MO CH'ANG CHU SHIH FANG SENG  
南 無 常 住 十 方 僧。  
Blessed be ever-dwelling Sangha in all places.

NA MO PEN SHIH SHIH CHIA HOU NI FO  
南 無 本 師 釋 迦 牟 尼 佛。  
Blessed be our own Master Sakyamuni Buddha.

NA MO HSIAO TSAI YEN SHOU YAO SHIH FO  
南 無 消 災 延 壽 藥 師 佛。  
Blessed be the saving and healing Bhaisajayaguru Buddha.

NA MO CHI LO SHIH CHIEH A MI TO FO  
南 無 極 樂 世 界 阿 彌 陀 佛。  
Blessed be Amitabha the Buddha of the Western Paradise.

NA MO TANG LAI HSIA SHENG NI LE TSUN FO  
南 無 當 來 下 生 彌 勒 尊 佛。  
Blessed be the honored Maitreya, the incoming Buddha.

NA MO SHIH FANG SAN SHIH I CHI'EH CHU FO  
南 無 十 方 三 世 一 切 諸 佛。  
Blessed be all Buddhas in all places and at all times.

NA MO TA CHIH WEN SHU SHIH LI P'U SA  
南 無 大 智 文 殊 師 利 菩 薩 。

Blessed be Bodhisattva Manjusri of the greatest wisdom.

NA MO TA HENG P'U HSIEN P'U SA  
南 無 大 行 普 賢 菩 薩 。

Blessed be Bodhisattva Samanhabhadra of the highest achievement.

NA MO TA PEI KUAN SHIH YIN P'U SA  
南 無 大 悲 觀 世 音 菩 薩 。

Blessed be Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, the most compassionate.

NA MO TA SHIH CHIH P'U SA  
南 無 大 勢 至 菩 薩 。

Blessed be Bodhisattva Mahasthamaprapta.

NA MO CH'ING CHING TA HAI CHUNG P'U SA  
南 無 清 淨 大 海 眾 菩 薩 。

Blessed be all Bodhisattvas in the great pure congregations.

NA MO HU FA WEI T'O TSUN T'IEN P'U SA  
南 無 護 法 韋 駄 尊 天 菩 薩 。

Blessed be Bodhisattva Weito, the honored guardian of Dharma.

NA MO HU FA CHU T'IEN P'U SA  
南 無 護 法 諸 天 菩 薩 。

Blessed be all Bodhisattvas Devas, guardians of the Dharma.

NA MO CHIEH LAN SHENG CHUNG P'U SA  
南 無 伽 藍 聖 眾 菩 薩 。

Blessed be all the saintly Bodhisattvas of Sangharama.

NA MO LI TAI TSU SHIH P'U SA  
南 無 歷 代 祖 師 菩 薩 。

Blessed be Bodhisattvas Patriarchs of all generations.